APPENDIX M

BIOLOGICAL FIELD SURVEYS

CITY OF NATIONAL CITY - GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND CEQA ANALYSIS
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

The City of National City is currently in the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) to analyze the environmental impacts associated with the City's proposed Comprehensive Land Use Update project (see project description, below). In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the EIR will provide a programmatic analysis of the environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the Comprehensive Land Use Update. In order to adequately analyze these environmental impacts, the existing conditions within National City have been identified and described. This document summarizes the existing conditions of the biological resources of National City.

The Comprehensive Land Use Update includes all incorporated areas of National City, as well as the unincorporated portion of San Diego County known as Lincoln Acres, which lies within the southeastern part of the City. This unincorporated portion is not under the jurisdiction of National City, but it has been included within for the General Plan Planning Area for planning purposes. This area will be referred to as "National City" in this document and the EIR.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Comprehensive Land Use Update project includes National City's draft General Plan update, a draft Land Use Code (Municipal Code Title 18) update, and a Climate Action Plan; amendments to the Downtown Specific Plan and Housing Element as necessary to ensure consistency with the updated General Plan; and five specific development projects as follows: Street Conversions/Community Corridors, Senior Village Expansion, Las Palmas Park and Facilities Vision Concept Plan, Kimball Park Master Plan, and El Toyon Park Master Plan. These documents will supersede the current City of National City General Plan, which was last updated in 1996, and portions of the current Municipal Code. The proposed project is intended to provide the control and regulation necessary to ensure that growth in National City occurs in an orderly fashion.

HABITATS

Although most of National City is fully developed with residential, commercial, industrial, and military uses, various natural areas are found scattered throughout the City. However, the majority of these have been altered from their original state through the course of adjoining development, including the channelization of many of National City's watercourses. Natural and/or undeveloped areas currently

present within the City consist mainly of urban canyons, undeveloped slopes, several drainages, a portion of the Sweetwater River, Paradise Marsh, and Paradise Creek. Habitats, as designated by numerical code, follow Holland[1]. The habitats currently present within National City consist of the following:

Urban/Developed (Holland Code 12000)/ Disturbed Habitat (Holland Code 11300)

As mentioned in the Introduction, most of National City is fully developed with infrastructure, residences, businesses, offices, hospitals, schools, parks, industrial areas, landscaping, and other urban uses. All of these areas qualify as Urban/Developed (U/D) habitat and offer little to no biological resource values. Also included in this general category is Disturbed Habitat (DH), which is mostly found within the City in the form of undeveloped/vacant lots and other upland areas that are unvegetated or support weedy, ruderal vegetation. In addition, some of the residences in the City contain large backyards that are disturbed or ruderal, and these backyards also qualify as DH. Areas of DH also offer little to no biological resource values, although some of the flat, unvegetated areas of the city have the potential to support seasonal wetlands or vernal pools.

Southern Coastal Salt Marsh (Holland Code 52120)

National City supports several areas of Southern Coastal Salt Marsh (SCSM), ranging in condition from very disturbed/degraded to very high value. This habitat-type is restricted to the western portion of National City, in creeks and estuaries that are closely connected to the San Diego Bay.

The largest, most significant area of SCSM within National City, Paradise Marsh, is located at the city's southern boundary, south of West 24th Street, west of the Interstate 5 Freeway, and east of West 32nd Street. Paradise Marsh is part of the Sweetwater National Wildlife Refuge and is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The next largest area of SCSM is found in the old course of the Sweetwater River, which is located at the city's southern boundary, to the south of West 35th Street, west of National City Boulevard, and east of I-5. This habitat-type occurs within a slice of the Sweetwater River located east of Edgemere Drive and west of the junction of the 805 and the 54 Freeways. The western portion of Paradise Creek, which crosses the central portion of the city from northeast to southwest, beginning at Kimball Park and extending west to where the Creek is channelized under I-5, also supports SCSM. Additional SCSM is present within a tributary to Paradise Marsh that is located south of West 30th Street, west of Hoover Avenue, and east of I-5. The smallest area of SCSM within National City is found in a drainage that runs east of East Harbor Drive and drains into the 7th Street Channel, north of West 8th Street.

These areas of SCSM are dominated by Pickleweed (*Salicornia* sp.), Salty Susan (*Jaumea carnosa*), Desert Salt Grass (*Distichlis spicata*), Cordgrass (*Spartina* sp.), American Saltwort (*Batis maritima*), and

[1] *Holland, R.F., 1996, Preliminary descriptions of the terrestrial natural communities of California, State of California, Nongame-Heritage Program, 156p (amended).*

others. Depending on their degree of disturbance, some of the areas of SCSM are infused with non-native species.

Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (Holland Code 32500)

Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (DCSS) is found in several discrete patches throughout National City. Several of these patches appear to be restoration projects associated with adjoining development. The remaining patches all exhibit at least a minor degree of disturbance from edge effects caused by the surrounding urbanization.

The largest, highest value area of DCSS in National City is located at the City's northeastern corner, south of the intersection of East Plaza Blvd and Paradise Valley Rd, in association with a canyon that continues east into the City of San Diego. The second largest area of DCSS is found on the western and northern slopes of Paradise Marsh, east of the old railroad tracks and south of the Marina Gateway Best Western hotel. A small patch of restored DCSS is present within the Paradise Creek Educational Park. DCSS occurs in two small patches along the western boundary of the National City Golf Course, east of Palm Avenue and east of Virginia Drive. An area of landscaped, but fairly high value, DCSS occurs at the southern boundary of the City, south of the 54 Freeway and east of the 805 Freeway. Three adjoining urban canyons located along the eastern boundary of National City and north of Alta Drive, Baker Place, and Ridgeway Drive, respectively, also support DCSS.

Indicators within this habitat-type include California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), Flat-top Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Laurel Sumac (*Malosma laurina*), California Encelia (*Encelia californica*), Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), Broom Baccharis (*Baccharis sarothroides*), and others, including non-native species and ornamentals that have encroached into the DCSS from adjoining development.

Maritime Succulent Scrub (Holland Code 32400)

The City supports several areas dominated by native vegetation that qualify as Maritime Succulent Scrub (MSS). These are all remnant patches found on slopes that were never graded during the development of the City.

A slope located north of Sweetwater Road and Fairlomas Road and south of Biggs Court, Menard Street, and Kellie Court supports the largest patch of MSS in National City. One of the most biologically significant areas of MSS occurs north of Valley Road and south of the southern terminus of Alta Drive in the southeastern corner of National City. The other significant, minimally disturbed patch of MSS is present along the eastern boundary of National City, immediately southwest of the southern terminus of Ridgeway Drive and north of the northern terminus of Calle Abajo. Another, smaller patch of MSS is found immediately to the east of the southeast corner of the National City Golf Course driving range, south of Lincoln Court and north of Grove Street.

This habitat-type is dominated by thickets of Coast Cholla (*Opuntia prolifera*), with lesser numbers of Jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*), Lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*), Fishhook Cactus (*Mammillaria dioica*), Flat-top Buckwheat, and other native shrubs and succulents. The different areas of MSS exhibit varying degrees of infusion with non-native species.

Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest (Holland Code 61320)

National City supports two areas of mostly undisturbed Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest (SAWRF). The largest and most significant of these areas is found in the portion of the Sweetwater River located at the southeastern corner of the City, immediately to the west and south of Plaza Bonita. The other patch of SAWRF is located south of Sweetwater Road, west of Calmoor Road, and north and east of Fuentes Court, in the form of a revegetation area for the surrounding Bonita Creek residential development. This habitat-type is dominated by mature Arroyo Willows (*Salix lasiolepis*) and other species of willow, with occasional non-native species, such as Mexican Fan Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*).

Freshwater Marsh (Holland Code 52400)

Mostly intact Freshwater Marsh (FWM) vegetation is also found in two areas of National City. The portion of the Sweetwater River that supports SAWRF also supports adjoining areas of FWM. The second area of FWM is present within a wetland restoration area for the Bella Bonita residential development, located north of Sweetwater Road and south and east of Via Romaya. The areas that qualify as FWM are dominated by dense stands of Cattails (*Typha* sp.), with minimal invasion by non-native species, such as Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia* sp).

Disturbed Freshwater Wetland (Holland Code 11200)

The City supports several small areas of Disturbed Freshwater Wetland (DFWW). This habitat-type is classified as “Disturbed” due to its strong non-native element and the fact that the subject watercourses have undergone extensive human manipulation.

One of these areas is located within Paradise Creek, northeast of Kimball Way and west of Highland Avenue. Another patch of DFWW is found within a drainage feature that runs immediately to the south of the Palmer Way School, north of East 16th Street and west of Earle Drive. Another drainage feature supporting DFWW begins to the south of Lirope Street and flows parallel to Cherry Blossom Street before draining into a culvert under East 8th Street. A drainage feature that crosses the center of the National City Golf Course in a north-south direction also supports DFWW. This habitat-type is found within a drainage features that runs through an urban canyon located east of Van Ness Avenue and Ridgeway Drive, west of Rachael Avenue, and north of Calle Abajo. The largest, most significant area of DFWW in National City is located north of Plaza Bonita Road and the Sweetwater River and south of the 54 Freeway in a large, ruderal piece of land crossed by several highly disturbed watercourses that drain into the Sweetwater River.

Native species in the DFWW include Cattails (*Typha* sp.), Bulrush (*Scirpus* sp.), and occasional Willows (*Salix* spp). Non-native species present in this habitat-type include Giant Wild Reed (*Arundo donax*), Mexican Fan Palm, Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), Salt Cedar (*Tamarix* sp.), and others. It appears that an *Arundo* removal program is in progress in several of the areas listed above. This species has been cut back and treated with herbicide in these areas, but these areas must be maintained in order for *Arundo* to be completely eradicated. The areas characterized as DFWW could be further broken down into disturbed Southern Willow Scrub (Holland Code 63320), Freshwater Marsh (Holland Code 52400), Non-vegetated Channel (Holland Code 13200), and possibly other habitat designations.

Native Grassland (Holland Code 42100)

A single, disturbed, very small patch of Native Grassland (NG) is found at the eastern boundary of National City on a north-facing slope that is located north of Baker Place, northwest of the northern terminus of Calle Abajo, and southwest of Ridgeway Drive. This habitat-type is dominated by Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium bellum*), Stipa (*Stipa* sp.), and Tarplant (*Hemizonia* sp.), along with various non-native elements.

Non-native Grassland (Holland Code 42200)

Many of the undeveloped portions of National City could qualify as Non-native Grassland (NNG). This habitat-type is found in several urban canyons and vacant lots throughout the City. Patchy NNG is present in an undeveloped area bounded by East 30th Street to the south, East 27th Street to the north, A Avenue to the west, and D Avenue to the east. A vacant lot bounded by Eta Street to the south, Bucky Lane to the north, North Highland Avenue to the west, and Soltura Lane to the east also supports NNG. Another area of NNG is located north of Paradise Valley Road, south of Bluebonnet Court, and west of Petal Drive. An additional area of NNG occurs within an urban canyon located immediately to the south of Palmer Way School, north of East 16th Street, and west of Earle Drive. This habitat-type is present along the western boundary of the National City Golf Course and in an urban canyon between Van Ness Avenue and Rachael Avenue. NNG is also found at the southeastern corner of National City, to the east and west of Plaza Bonita Center Way and south of Valley Road and Sweetwater Heights Centennial Park.

The NNG in National City is indicated by Ripgut Brome (*Bromus diandrus*), Wild Oat (*Avena* sp.), Wild Radish (*Raphanus sativus*), Bermuda Grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), and other Eurasian grasses and forbs.

Open Water (Holland Code 13100)

As mentioned above, many of the drainages in National City have been channelized over the course of the development of the City. Watercourses that have been channelized in concrete and are unvegetated but that support running or standing water year-round qualify as Open Water (OW). These areas may be salt, brackish, or freshwater, depending on their proximity to the San Diego Bay. The larger areas of OW support aquatic vegetation and wildlife.

The most significant area of this habitat-type is found within the Sweetwater River, which supports mostly OW from where it is bridged by Highland Ave, extending west to where it enters the San Diego Bay. Open Water is also found within the 7th Street Channel, which enters the City at its northern boundary, flowing through the U.S. Naval Station and meeting the San Diego Bay at the intersection of Cummings Road and 7th Street. All of the areas of SCSM discussed above in the SCSM section also support OW components.

Bay (Holland Code 13120)

National City extends into the San Diego Bay for a short distance. This portion of the City qualifies as supporting Bay habitat, which consists of open salt water habitat supporting marine species beneath the surface of the bay.

Saltpan/Mudflats (Holland Code 13300)

The extreme southwestern corner of National City supports Saltpan/Mudflats (S/M). These areas consist of the modified margins of San Diego Bay where shallow tidal influence has allowed evaporative salt production (saltworks) to be established.

SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES

Special status plants are those listed as "Endangered", "Threatened", or "Candidate for Listing" by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), that are included in the California Native Plan Society's (CNPS) "Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants", or that are considered noteworthy by other conservation agencies, organizations, or local botanists[2]. Special status animals are those listed as "Endangered", "Threatened", or "Candidate for Listing" by the CDFG or the USFWS, that are designated as "Watch List (WL)", "Species of Special Concern (SSC)", or "Fully Protected" by the CDFG, that are considered "Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC)" by the USFWS, or that are determined to be noteworthy by the National Audubon Society, conservation agencies and organizations, or local zoologists[3]. Limited biological reconnaissance fieldwork, together with a search of the California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB), which is a computerized inventory of endangered, threatened, or rare species occurrences maintained by CDFG, and the CNPS "Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants", was conducted in order to identify sensitive species previously detected or with potential to occur in the National City. For a list of the special status plant and animal species obtained by this search, see Tables 1 and 2 below.

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[2] *Tibor, D.P. and L.A. Vorobik, 2001, Inventory of rare and endangered vascular plants of California, California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, 387p.*

[3] *California Department of Fish and Game, 2009, Special animals, Natural Diversity Data Base, State of California Resources Agency, Sacramento.z*

Table 1. Special Status Plant Species Known From or with the Potential to Occur in National City

Species	Form	Potential Habitat Type in National City	CNPS List	Federal/ State Status
Adolphia californica California Adolphia	perennial deciduous shrub	• DCSS • NG	List 2.1	None
Ambrosia chenopodiifolia San Diego Bursage	perennial shrub	• DCSS • MSS	List 2.1	None
Ambrosia monogyra Single-whorl Burrobrush	perennial shrub	• Dry riparian areas	List 2.2	None
Ambrosia pumila San Diego Ambrosia	perennial rhizomatous herb	• NG • NNG	List 1B.1	USFWS Endangered
Androsace elongata ssp. *acuta* California Androsace	annual herb	• DCSS • NG	List 4.2	None
Aphanisma blitoides Aphanisma	annual herb	• MSS • DCSS	List 1B.2	None
Artemisia palmeri San Diego Sagewort	perennial deciduous shrub	• DCSS • SAWRF	List 4.2	None
Astragalus deanei Dean's Milkvetch	perennial herb	• DCSS • NNG	List 1B.1	None
Atriplex coulteri Coulter's Saltbush	perennial herb	• MSS • DCSS • NG • NNG	List 1B.2	None
Atriplex pacifica South Coast Saltscale	annual herb	• MSS • DCSS	List 1B.2	None
Azolla mexicana Mexican Mosquito Fern	annual/perennial herb	• FWM • OW	List 4.2	None
Bergerocactus emoryi Golden-spined Cereus	perennial stem succulent	• MSS • DCSS	List 2.2	None
Bloomeria clevelandii San Diego Goldenstar	perennial bulbiferous herb	• DCSS • NG	List 1B.1	None
Calandrinia breweri Brewer's Redmaid	annual herb	• DCSS	List 4.2	None
Calandrinia maritime Sea Kisses	annual herb	• MSS • DCSS • NG	List 4.2	None

Camissonia lewisii Lewis' Evening Primrose	annual herb	• MSS • DCSS • NG	List 3	None
Convolvulus simulans Small-flowered Morning Glory	annual herb	• DCSS • NG • NNG	List 4.2	None
Cordylanthus maritimus ssp.*maritimus* Salt Marsh Bird's Beak	annual herb hemiparasitic	• SCSM	List 1B.2	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered
Deinandra conjugens Otay Tarplant	annual herb	• DCSS • NG • NNG	List 1B.1	USFWS Threatened; CDFG Endangered
Deinandra paniculata Paniculate Tarplant	annual herb	•DCSS •NG • NNG	List 4.2	None
Dichondra occidentalis Western Dichondra	perennial rhizomatous herb	• DCSS • NG	List 4.2	None
Dudleya variegata Variegated Dudleya	perennial herb	• DCSS • NG	List 1B.2	None
Ericameria palmeri var. *palmeri* Palmer's Ericameria	perennial evergreen shrub	• SAWRF (margins) • DCSS	List 1B.1	None
Eryngium aristulatum var. *parishii* San Diego Button-celery	annual/perennial herb	• NG	List 1B.1	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered
Euphorbia misera Cliff Spurge	shrub	• MSS • DCSS	List 2.2	None
Ferocactus viridescens Coast Barrel Cactus	perennial stem succulent	• DCSS • NG	List 2.1	None
Frankenia palmeri Palmer's Frankenia	perennial herb	• SCSM	List 2.1	None
Harpagonella palmeri Palmer's Grapplinghook	annual herb	• DCSS • NG • NNG	List 4.2	None
Heterotheca sessiliflora ssp.*sessiliflora* Beach Golden-aster	perennial herb	• MSS • DCSS	List 1B.1	None
Holocarpha virgata ssp. elongate Graceful Tarplant	annual herb	• DCSS • NG • NNG	List 4.2	None
Isocoma menziesii var. *decumbens* Decumbent Goldenbush	perennial shrub	• DCSS • NG • NNG	List 1B.2	None
Iva hayesiana San Diego Marsh-elder	perennial herb	• SAWRF • FWM • DFWW	List 2.2	None

Juncus acutus ssp. *leopoldii* Southwestern Spiny Rush	perennial rhizomatous herb	• SAWRF • FWM • DFWW	List 4.2	None
Lasthenia glabrata ssp. *coulteri* Coulter's Goldfields	annual herb	• FWM • DFWW • NNG (mesic, vernal pools)	List 1B.1	None
Lepidium virginicum var. *robinsonii* Robinson's Pepper-grass	annual herb	• MSS • DCSS	List 1B.2	None
Lotus nuttallianus Nuttall's Lotus	annual herb	• MSS • DCSS	List 1B.1	None
Lycium californicum California Box-thorn	perennial shrub	• MSS • DCSS	List 4.2	None
Microseris douglasii ssp.*platycarpha* Small-flowered Microseris	annual herb	• DCSS • NG • NNG	List 4.2	None
Mucronea californica California Spineflower	annual herb	• DCSS • NG	List 4.2	None
Nama stenocarpum Mud Nama	annual/perennial herb	• SAWRF (margins)	List 2.2	None
Navarretia fossalis Spreading Navarretia	annual herb	• NNG (mesic) •Vernal pools	List 1B.1	USFWS Threatened
Navarretia prostrate Prostrate Navarretia	annual herb	• DCSS (mesic, vernal pools) • NG (mesic, vernal pools)	List 1B.1	None
Nemacaulis denudata var. *denudate* Coast Woolly-heads	annual herb	• MSS	List 1B.2	None
Ophioglossum californicum California Adder's-tongue	perennial rhizomatous herb	• NG • DCSS (mesic, vernal pools)	List 4.2	None
Orobanche parishii ssp.*brachyloba* Short-lobed Broomrape	perennial herb parasitic	• MSS • DCSS	List 4.2	None
Pentachaeta aurea ssp. aurea Golden-rayed Pentachaeta	annual herb	• DCSS • NG • NNG	List 4.2	None
Phacelia ramosissima var.*austrolitoralis* South Coast Branching Phacelia	perennial herb	• MSS • DCSS	List 4.2	None
Piperia cooperi Chaparral Rein Orchid	perennial herb	• NG • NNG	List 4.2	None
Psilocarphus brevissimus var.*multiflorus* Delta Woolly-marbles	annual herb	• DCSS (mesic, vernal pools)	List 4.2	None

Romneya coulteri Coulter's Matilija Poppy	perennial rhizomatous herb	• DCSS	List 4.2	None
Opuntia californica var. *californica* Snake Cholla	perennial stem succulent	• MSS • DCSS	List 1B.1	None
Selaginella cinerascens Ashy Spike-moss	rhizomatous herb	• MSS • DCSS • NG	List 4.1	None
Senecio astephanus San Gabriel Ragwort	perennial herb	• MSS	List 4	None
Stemodia durantifolia Purple Stemodia	perennial herb	• DCSS (washes)	List 2.1	None
Suaeda esteroa California Seablite	perennial herb	• SCSM	List 1B.2	USFWS Endangered
Suaeda taxifolia Woolly Seablite	perennial evergreen shrub	• MSS • CSS • SCSM	List 4.2	None
Viguiera laciniata San Diego County Viguiera	perennial shrub	• MSS • DCSS	List 4.2	None

Table 2. Special Status Animal Species with the Potential to Occur in National City

Species	Form	Potential Habitat Type in National City	Federal/State Status
Accipiter cooperii Cooper's hawk	bird	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF (nesting)	CDFG WL
Aimophila ruficeps canescens Southern California Rufous-crowned Sparrow	bird	• DCSS	CDFG WL
Anniella pulchra pulchra Silvery Legless Lizard	reptile	• NG, NNG • DCSS • SAWRF, DFWW	CDFG SSC
Antrozous pallidus Pallid Bat	mammal	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF	CDFG SSC
Aspidoscelis hyperythra Orange-throated Whiptail	reptile	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF (margins)	CDFG SSC
Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri Coastal Western Whiptail	reptile	• DCSS • MSS • SAWRF (margins)	None
Branchinecta sandiegonensis San Diego Fairy Shrimp	invertebrate	• DCSS (mesic, vernal pools) • NG, NNG (mesic, vernal pools)	USFWS Endangered
Branta bernicla Brant	bird	• Bay, OW • SCSM • S/M	CDFG SSC
Calypte costae Costa's Hummingbird	bird	• DCSS	None
Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis San Diego Cactus Wren	bird	• DCSS or MSS with tall Opuntia cacti for roosting and nesting	USFWS BCC; CDFG SSC
Carduelis lawrencei Lawrence's Goldfinch	bird	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF (margins for nesting)	USFWS BCC
Chaetodipus californicus femoralis Dulzura Pocket Mouse	mammal	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS	CDFG SSC
Chaetodipus fallax pallidus Pallid San Diego Pocket Mouse	mammal	• NG • NNG	CDFG SSC
Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus Western Snowy Plover	bird	• SCSM • S/M (nesting)	USFWS Threatened, BCC; CDFG SSC
Choeronycteris mexicana Mexican Long-tongued Bat	mammal	• DCSS • MSS	CDFG SSC

Chondestes grammacus Lark Sparrow	bird	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF (margins for nesting)	None
Cicindela gabbii Western Tidal-flat Tiger Beetle	invertebrate	• SCSM • S/M	None
Cicindela latesignata latesignata Western Beach Tiger Beetle	invertebrate	• S/M	None
Coleonyx variegatus abbotti San Diego Banded Gecko	reptile	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS	None
Danaus plexippus Monarch Butterfly	invertebrate	• NG, NNG • SAWRF /wind-protected tree groves	None
Dendroica petechia brewsteri Yellow Warbler	bird	• SAWRF, DFWW (nesting)	CDFG SSC
Diadophis punctatus similis San Diego Ringneck Snake	reptile	• DCSS, MSS • SAWRF, DFWW	None
Elanus leucurus White-tailed Kite	bird	• NG, NNG • SAWRF, DFWW (nesting)	CDFG FP
Empidonax traillii extimus Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	bird	• SAWRF	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered
Eremophila alpestris actia California Horned Lark	bird	• NG • NNG	CDFG WL
Eumeces skiltonianus interparietalis Coronado Skink	reptile	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF, DFWW	CDFG SSC
Falco columbarius Merlin	bird	• NG, NNG • SCSM (wintering)	CDFG WL
Hydroprogne caspia Caspian Tern	bird	• Bay, OW, SCSM • FWM • S/M (nesting colony located on dikes of saltworks at south end of San Diego Bay)	USFWS BCC
Icteria virens Yellow-breasted Chat	bird	• SAWRF, DFWW (nesting)	CDFG SSC
Lanius ludovicianus Loggerhead Shrike	bird	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF	USFWS BCC; CDFG SSC
Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus California Black Rail	bird	• FWM • SCSM • Bay	USFWS BCC; CDFG Threatened, FP
Neotoma lepida intermedia San Diego Desert Woodrat	mammal	• DCSS • SAWRF, DFWW	CDFG SSC

Onychomys torridus ramona Southern Grasshopper Mouse	mammal	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS	CDFG SSC
Pandion haliaetus Osprey	bird	• Bay, OW	CDFG WL
Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi Belding's savannah sparrow	bird	• SCSM • S/M	CDFG Endangered
Picoides nuttallii Nuttall's Woodpecker	bird	• SAWRF •DFWW	None
Polioptila californica californica California Gnatcatcher	bird	• DCSS • MSS	USFWS Threatened; CDFG SSC
Rallus longirostris levipes Light-footed Clapper Rail	bird	• SCSM	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered, FP
Salvadora hexalepis virgultea Coast Patch-nosed Snake	reptile	• DCSS • MSS	CDFG SSC
Scaphiopus hammondii Western Spadefoot Toad	amphibian	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF, FWM, DFWW, vernal pools	CDFG SSC
Selasphorus sasin Allen's Hummingbird	bird	• NG, NNG • DCSS, MSS • SAWRF, FWM, DFWW	None
Sterna forsteri Forster's Tern	bird	• Bay, OW, SCSM • FWM • S/M (nesting colony located on dikes of saltworks at south end of San Diego Bay)	None
Sternula antillarum browni California Least Tern	bird	• SCSM	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered, FP
Thalasseus elegans Elegant Tern	bird	• Bay, OW, SCSM • S/M (nesting colony located on dikes of saltworks at south end of San Diego Bay)	USFWS BCC; CDFG WL
Thamnophis hammondii Two-striped Garter Snake	reptile	• SAWRF • FWM • DFWW	CDFG SSC
Vireo bellii pusillus Least Bell’s Vireo	bird	• SAWRF	USFWS Endangered, BCC; CDFG Endangered

WETLANDS

National City supports jurisdictional wetlands regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)[4], the CDFG[5], and/or the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). All of the following habitat-types would fall under the jurisdiction of at least one of these agencies: SCSM, SAWRF, FWM, DFWW, OW, Bay, and Saltpan/Mudflats.

LOCAL POLICIES, ORDINANCES, AND ADOPTED PLANS

National City's current General Plan contains policies and implementation guidelines regarding Conservation and Open Space that are intended to protect biological resources within the City. This includes the designation of three of the most biologically sensitive areas of the City as Open Space Reserves. In addition, all areas of the City located within the coastal zone are subject to the development standards and specific requirements of the Local Coastal Program Land Use Plan (LCP), which contains a Marsh Preservation Policy designed to protect biological resources associated with Paradise Marsh, Bannister Marsh, and the Sweetwater River. The Local Coastal Program Implementation document is a supplement to the Land Use Code that applies the provisions of the LCP to lands within the coastal zone. The City's current Land Use Code also contains policies regarding the protection of biological resources, such as restrictions on land uses within Open Space Reserves and other measures.

National City is not a participant in California's Natural Community Conservation Planning program and is not subject to the requirements of any adopted Habitat Conservation Plan or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

IMPACT ANALYSIS

The EIR will evaluate the projected build-out of the Comprehensive Land Use Update in the 2030 horizon year, consistent with CEQA requirements that an EIR evaluate the "reasonably foreseeable" direct and indirect impacts of a proposed project. The EIR will review potential environmental impacts associated with the adoption and implementation of the proposed project, including impacts to biological resources, and determine corresponding mitigation measures, as necessary.

This document is not intended to provide a detailed analysis of impacts to biological resources associated with specific projects under the Comprehensive Land Use Update, as these specific projects will be subject to project-level environmental review. Rather, the purpose of this document is to provide an overview of potentially "significant" impacts to biological resources associated with the adoption of the

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[4] *Code of Federal Regulations, 2005, Title 40, Protection of Environment, Part 232.2, Definitions.*

[5] *Cowardin, L.M., et. al., 1979, Classification of wetlands and deepwater habitats of the United States, U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Biological Services, Washington D.C.*

Comprehensive Land Use Update, based on the biological resources that are known to currently be present within National City, and to provide an overview of potential mitigation measures.

Specific impacts to biological resources identified in connection with three of the five specific development projects (the Las Palmas Park and Facilities Vision Concept Plan, Kimball Park Master Plan, and El Toyon Park Master Plan) are discussed in the following documents, respectively: “A Biological Resources Survey Report for the Las Palmas Park and Facilities Vision Concept Plan” (Scheidt, 2010), “A Biological Resources Survey Report for the Kimball Park Concept Plan” (Scheidt, 2010), and “A Biological Resources Survey Report for the El Toyon Park Concept Plan” (Scheidt, 2010). Subsequent projects will also be reviewed by the City for consistency with the proposed General Plan update, Land Use Code, Municipal Code, and Climate Action Plan, and adequate project-level environmental review will be conducted as required by CEQA. This will include analyses of potential impacts to biological resources and recommendations for suitable mitigation.

Impacts to biological resources are assessed as being either “significant” or “less than significant”, as defined by CEQA. The determination of impact significance is based on one or all of the following criteria[6]:

- a substantial effect on a rare or endangered species of plant or animal or habitat of that species,
- a substantial interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species,
- a substantial reduction of habitat for fish, wildlife, or plants,
- a conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources,
- a conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Impacts to biological resources may be direct or indirect. Direct impacts result from the actual removal of habitat, plants, and animals from the site through grading, brushing, clearing, and construction. These direct impacts are considered permanent, because they result in an irreversible conversion of habitats to developed areas. Indirect impacts also affect habitats, plants, and/or animals residing on or near the project site. These are not the direct result of grading or development. Examples of indirect impacts include introduction of exotic species that may crowd out or compete with native species, human or pet intrusions into natural areas, lighting, traffic, and noise. Indirect impacts are often called "edge effects".

Any impacts to sensitive habitats would be considered “significant” and would require suitable mitigation. Sensitive habitats are those that are rare, depleted, or that support significant populations of sensitive species. The habitats found within National City that would qualify as sensitive include the following:

- Southern Coastal Salt Marsh
- Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub

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[6] *California Code of Regulations, 2009, as amended, Title 14, Natural Resources, Division 6, Resources Agency, Chapter 3, Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act*

- Maritime Succulent Scrub
- Southern Arroyo Willow Riparian Forest
- Freshwater Marsh
- Disturbed Freshwater Wetland
- Native Grassland
- Open Water
- Bay
- Saltpan/Mudflats
- Non-native Grassland may also be considered sensitive based on its value for raptor foraging, although this habitat is generally not considered sensitive in and of itself

Impacts to special status species, particularly those listed as "Endangered", "Threatened", or "Candidate for Listing" by the CDFG and/or the USFWS, would be considered “significant” and would require mitigation.

Impacts to jurisdictional wetlands or waters would be considered “significant” and would require mitigation.

Conflicts with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance, would be considered “significant” and would require mitigation.

Conflicts with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan would be considered “significant” and would require mitigation. However, as discussed above, National City is not subject to the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, this guideline does not apply to the Comprehensive Land Use Update project.

MITIGATION

The Wildlife Agencies (CDFG, USFWS) generally recommend that impacts to sensitive habitats be minimized whenever possible. Mitigation for unavoidable impacts is generally provided via on or offsite habitat preservation at a 1-to-1 ratio or higher. Mitigation ratios depend on the relative sensitivity of the impacted habitat and would be negotiated between the City and the Wildlife Agencies. In the case of the EIR for the Comprehensive Land Use Update, the CDFG has recommended that onsite habitat restoration or enhancement be emphasized as mitigation for habitat impacts, with offsite mitigation via habitat restoration and/or acquisition and preservation in perpetuity to be considered if onsite mitigation would not be biologically viable. On or offsite habitat preservation may require the preparation of a Habitat Management Plan (HMP) which would designate a habitat manager and specify provisions intended to maintain the viability of the preserved habitat in perpetuity.

Any proposed impacts to state or federally listed species would require that the City obtain “take authorization” from the CDFG and/or USFWS, pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act and/or the Federal Endangered Species Act. Securing a permit authorizing the “take“ of a listed species (an Incidental Take Permit) would require consultation with the Wildlife Agencies. Prior to issuing an Incidental Take Permit, the Wildlife Agencies would require that specific mitigation measures be identified regarding the listed species to be impacted. Mitigation measures could include the preservation of on or offsite habitat known to support the listed species, restoration of on or offsite habitat with the potential to support the listed species, seasonal restrictions on construction, measures to avoid indirect impacts, and others. Impacts to sensitive species that are not state or federally listed but are considered otherwise sensitive may or may not require “species specific” mitigation. Impacts to these species are generally mitigated for via the preservation of on or offsite habitat with the potential to support these species, although “species specific” mitigation is sometimes required, particularly when extensive impacts to native species are anticipated.

The Regulatory Agencies (CDFG, RWQCB, ACOE) recommend that impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and “waters” be avoided whenever feasible, and that biological buffers and wetland setbacks be put into place to protect existing wetlands. In the case of the EIR for the Comprehensive Land Use Update, the CDFG has recommended that wetland buffers be put into place along the Paradise Creek corridor. Unavoidable impacts to wetlands and “waters” must comply with the “no net loss” policy, which means that proposed mitigation must ensure that there be no net loss of wetland habitat values or acreages. The Regulatory Agencies generally require that wetland impacts be mitigated for at between a 1-to-1 and a 3-to-1 ratio, depending on the nature of the wetland being impacted (i.e., degree of disturbance, habitat-type, wetland functions and values provided, etc). In order to ensure no net loss, at least 1-to-1 of the applicable mitigation ratio must consist of wetlands creation. Any remaining mitigation may generally consist of wetlands restoration and/or enhancement. Wetlands creation, restoration, and/or enhancement activities require the preparation and implementation of a Regulatory Agency-approved Revegetation Plan.

Impacts to jurisdictional wetlands and “waters” also generally require the securement of various Regulatory Agency permits. These would include Clean Water Act Section 404/401 Permits from the ACOE and RWQCB, respectively, and a 1600-series Streambed Alteration Agreement with the CDFG, or proof that such permits are not required.

Seasonal restrictions on development are generally required by the Wildlife Agencies order to ensure compliance with the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code. In the case of the EIR for the Comprehensive Land Use Update, the CDFG recommends that the removal of vegetation and construction occur outside of the avian breeding season, defined as from 1 February through 1 September of each year. If these activities are necessary during the bird breeding season, a qualified biologist should conduct a nesting bird survey within three days prior to the initiation of work in the area to ensure that no nesting birds would be impacted by the project. If an active nest is identified, a buffer should be established between the construction activities and the nest so that nesting activities are not interrupted. The buffer should be a minimum width of 300

feet (500 for raptors), should be delineated by temporary fencing, and should remain in place as long as construction is occurring or until the nest is no longer active.

Because the Comprehensive Land Use Update is an update of the General Plan, Land Use Code, and associated documents, changes to local policies and ordinances protecting biological resources could occur, based on differences between past and current biological resource values within the City, the enactment of additional environmental regulations at the state or federal level, etc. However, it is anticipated that all existing biological resources within the City will continue to receive the same or greater level of protection under the Comprehensive Land Use Update as under the current General Plan, Land Use Code, LCP, etc. This will likely be necessary to ensure that the Comprehensive Land Use Update complies with all relevant state and federal environmental regulations, such as the California Coastal Act, the California and Federal Endangered Species Acts, and many others. Should a local policy and/or ordinance protecting biological resources not be included in the Comprehensive Land Use Update, the Regulatory Agencies and/or the Wildlife Agencies will likely recommend that a new policy and/or ordinance providing equal or greater protection be included in place of the policy and/or ordinance that is being eliminated.

A BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT
FOR THE
LAS PALMAS PARK AND FACILITIES VISION CONCEPT PLAN
CITY OF NATIONAL CITY
CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTION

This report addresses biological resources, project impacts, and CEQA compatibility for the proposed Las Palmas Park and Facilities Vision Concept Plan (hereafter "Las Palmas Park project"). The subject project proposes the re-development of portions of the existing Las Palmas Park, located in National City, California. The subject property totals approximately 82 acres, of which approximately 52 acres will be subject to re-development. The Las Palmas Park project site is located south of East 18th Street, west of the 805 Freeway, and north of East 30th Street/Sweetwater Road in the Olivewood neighborhood of the City of National City, California (Figure 1).

PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The Las Palmas Park project proposes the re-development of approximately 40 acres of the existing National City Golf Course and adjoining lands with community gardens, additional recreation facilities, public gathering spaces, future commercial development, and natural open space. The existing Las Palmas Elementary School, International Community Foundation, and Las Palmas Park recreational facilities will remain onsite, although they may be subject to minor improvements (Figure 4).

The Las Palmas Park project site consists of the National City Golf Course, which runs down the center of the site, Las Palmas Elementary School, which is located at the northeastern corner of the site, the Las Palmas Park recreational facilities, which are present immediately to the south of Las Palmas Elementary School, the International Community Foundation (Walton House), which is located near the southwest corner of the site, the Butterfly Garden, found near the northwest corner of the site, and undeveloped areas along the eastern and western site boundaries (Figure 2).

The National City Golf Course slopes gently to the south, with steeper east and west-facing slopes along its western and eastern boundaries, respectively. The remainder of the site is mostly flat. The project site is completely surrounded by residential and commercial development; thus, it may be characterized as an "infill" project.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to inventory the property with respect to biological resources, identify and map the onsite habitats, and present a discussion of rare, endangered, threatened, or otherwise sensitive plants or animals that could occur onsite. These data have been used to assess the site's biological resource values. This analysis allows a determination of project-related direct and indirect impacts, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and mitigation, if appropriate and necessary.

The property supports sensitive upland and wetland vegetation; impacts to these habitats will result in significant, measurable losses of biological resource values, necessitating mitigation, pursuant to CEQA.

METHODS

Biology field surveys of the Las Palmas Park project site were completed by the author and Julia Groebner, Associate Biologist, on 11 November 2009, 14 December 2009, 15 January 2010, and 2 March 2010. Weather conditions were conducive to field surveying on these dates, with overcast to clear skies, temperatures in the 60's and low 70's, and no appre ciable wind.

All accessible areas of the site were examined, and all plants, animals, and habitats encountered were inventoried in the field. Inaccessible areas, including certain slopes and areas where golf was being played, were surveyed with binoculars and by reviewing recent aerial photos of the site. The limits of each habitat-type were mapped in the field utilizing an aerial photograph of the property (Figure 3). All plants and animals identified in association with the site are listed in Table 1 at the end of this report.

Floral nomenclature used in this letter follows Munz[1] and others. Plant communities, as designated by numerical code, follow Holland[2]. Wildlife observations were made opportunistically. Binoculars were used to aid in observations and all wildlife species detected were noted. Animal nomenclature used in this report is taken from Stebbins[3] for reptiles and amphibians, Peterson[4] for birds, and Jameson, *et. al*[5] and Burt, *et. al*[6] for mammals.

RESULTS

Most of the Las Palmas Park project site supports development and associated landscaping. However, some areas of native or naturalized habitat still remain on the site, including Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub, Non-native Grassland, and Disturbed Freshwater Wetland (Figure 3).

Urban/Developed (Holland Code 12000) – 62.1 acres
The majority of the Las Palmas Park project site is already developed with the National City Golf Course,

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[1] *Munz, P.A., 1974, A flora of Southern California, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1086p.*
[2] *Holland, R.F., 1996, Preliminary descriptions of the terrestrial natural communities of California, State of California, Nongame-Heritage Program, 156p (amended).*
[3] *Stebbins, R.C., 1985, A field guide to western reptiles and amphibians, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 336p*
[4] *Peterson, R.T., 1966, A field guide to western birds, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1966, 366p.*
[5] *Jameson, E.W. and H.J. Peeters, 1988, California mammals, California Natural History Guides: 52, University of California Press, Berkeley.*
[6] *Burt, W.H. and R.P. Grossenheider, A field guide to the mammals, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1966, 289p.*

Las Palmas Elementary School, the International Community Foundation, which is housed in the historic Walton House, and existing Las Palmas Park recreation facilities, including a baseball diamond, two tennis courts, a swimming pool, and parking lots. All of these areas qualify as Urban/Developed (U/D). This habitat-type also completely surrounds the project site. Areas mapped as U/D are of little to no biological resource value.

Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (Holland Code 32500) – 1.2 acres

Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub (CSS) is found in several patches along the western side of the project site. These patches vary in their degree of disturbance, with the patch of CSS in the Butterfly Garden near the northwest corner of the site being very disturbed and the patch of CSS near the center of the site being mostly intact. The CSS in the Butterfly Garden is indicated by native species, such as Flat-top Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), White Sage (*Salvia apiana*), Black Sage (*S. mellifera*), and California Encelia (*Encelia californica*), with large numbers of non-natives, including Acacia (*Acacia* sp.), Sea Lavender (*Limonium* sp.), and Wild Anise (*Foeniculum vulgare*). The remaining patches of CSS are dominated by California Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), Coast Cholla (*Opuntia prolifera*), California Encelia, San Diego County Viguiera (*Viguiera laciniata*), Deerweed (*Lotus scoparius*), Blue Dicks (*Dichelostemma pulchellum*), and occasional non-natives. The CSS onsite is of low to moderate biological resource value, based on its degree of disturbance and its isolation from larger areas of native habitat. However, the CSS in the Butterfly Garden has high restoration potential.

Non-native Grassland (Holland Code 42200) – 9.3 acres

Non-native Grassland (NNG) is also found in a patchy distribution along the western and eastern property boundaries. This habitat-type is indicated by a thatch of non-native grasses and forbs, including Ripgut Brome *(Bromus diandrus)*, Perennial Mustard (*Brassica geniculata*), and others. Some areas of NNG support scattered large shrubs and small trees, including Lemonadeberry (*Rhus integrifolia*), European Olive (*Olea europa*), Peruvian Peppertree *(Schinus molle)*, and Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*). The biological resource value of NNG is low.

Disturbed Freshwater Wetland (Holland Code 11200) – 0.8 acre

A drainage feature begins near the center of the site and flows south across the property, exiting at the southern boundary and eventually draining into the Sweetwater River. The northern portion of the drainage supports Disturbed Freshwater Wetland (DFWW). This segment of the drainage is densely vegetated with non-native species, including Giant Wild Reed (*Arundo donax*), Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*), Sow Thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), and other weeds and noxious invasive hydrophytes. The biological resource value of the DFWW is currently low, although this habitat has high restoration potential. This habitat-type is associated with a jurisdictional wetland and waters of the state/U.S.

Non-native Vegetation (Holland Code 11000) – 8.5 acres

Non-native Vegetation (NNV) is present along the fringes of the golf course in areas that support dense landscaping associated with the golf course or with adjoining homes. These areas are dominated by

Acacia, Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), and other horticultural species. The areas mapped as NNV are of low biological resource value.

Non-vegetated Channel (Holland Code 13200) – 0.1 acre
The southerly portions of the onsite drainage qualify as Non-vegetated Channel (NVC). The NVC consists of two discrete segments of the drainage that support an open, sandy channel with well-defined bed and bank. The biological resource value of the NVC is low. This habitat-type is associated with waters of the state/U.S.

Plants

Sixty-three plant species were detected during the field surveys of this site. The plants observed on the Las Palmas Park project site typify the diversity normally found in annual grassland, sage scrub, disturbed wetland, and developed habitats in this part of San Diego County. A complete list of the plants detected, listed alphabetically, can be found in Table 1, attached. This list would be expected to represent at least 80 percent of the naturalized plants occurring on this property. The balance (mostly ephemeral annuals and some perennials in low numbers) would be detectable in the summer or fall months.

Animals

A variety of animals were observed using the project site. These are generally common species, abundant in the site's general vicinity. Additional common animal species certainly occur onsite, on at least an occasional basis, but were not directly observed during the field surveys. Eighteen species were detected during the field survey. Animals observed onsite are listed in Table 1, attached.

SENSITIVE RESOURCES

Sensitive Vegetation Communities

Vegetation communities (habitats) are generally considered "sensitive" if; *(a)* they are considered rare within the region by local experts, *(b)* they are known to support sensitive animal or plant species; and/or *(c)* they are known to serve as important wildlife corridors. These sensitive habitats are typically depleted throughout their known ranges, or are highly localized and/or fragmented.

The CSS, DFWW, and NVC on the Las Palmas Park project site are considered sensitive in that impacts to these habitats are regulated by the City pursuant to CEQA and by various state and federal agencies as jurisdictional lands. In terms of biological resource values, the habitat quality of the CSS, DFWW, and NVC is limited by their small size, degree of disturbance, and isolation.

Sensitive Plants

Two sensitive plant species were observed on the Las Palmas Park project site during the field surveys. These are California Box-thorn and San Diego County Viguiera, which are discussed in more detail below. Sensitive plants are those listed as "Rare", "Endangered", "Threatened", "of Special Concern", or otherwise considered noteworthy by California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the California Native Plant Society (CNPS), or other conservation agencies, organizations, or local botanists[7].

California Box-thorn
Lycium californicum
Listing: CNPS List 4.2
County status: San Diego County Sensitive Plant List, Group D (DPLU, 2006)
Federal/State status: none
Distribution: This species is found in Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Orange, San Diego, and Imperial Counties, the Channel Islands, and northern Baja California, Mexico
Habitat: Occurs in coastal scrub and coastal bluff scrub below 150 meters elevation
Status on Site: A single specimen of California Box-thorn was observed onsite near the central western property boundary, in association with a small patch of CSS. Other specimens may be present in inaccessible areas. In all cases, this species would be associated with remnant patches of CSS.

San Diego County Viguiera
Viguiera laciniata
Listing: CNPS List 4.2
County status: San Diego County Sensitive Plant List, Group D (DPLU, 2006)
Federal/State status: none
Distribution: This distinctive species occurs from about Mission Valley in central San Diego County south to adjacent areas in northern Baja California along the coast and in foothill areas. Reported localities in San Diego County include Mission Valley, La Mesa, El Cajon, Portrero, Dehesa, Otay, and Tecate. Many populations are threatened by development, although it remains common where it occurs. Also found in Orange County and in other areas where it has been used in hydroseeding.
Habitat: Occurs in coastal sage scrub, maritime scrub, and xeric chaparral, occasionally as a co-dominant
Status on Site: San Diego County Viguiera is occasional onsite in the CSS.

Numerous additional sensitive plants are known from the general vicinity of the property (Table 3). Due to the developed nature most of the site, the degree of disturbance of the native habitats onsite, and their isolation from additional areas of native habitat, no highly sensitive plant species or significant populations of sensitive species are anticipated to occur onsite.

[7] *Tibor, D.P. and L.A. Vorobik, 2001, Inventory of rare and endangered vascular plants of California, California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, 387p.*

Sensitive Animals

No sensitive animal species were detected onsite during the field surveys. Sensitive animals are those listed as "Rare", "Endangered", "Threatened", "of Special Concern" or otherwise noteworthy by the CDFG, the USFWS, the National Audubon Society, or other conservation agencies, organizations, or local zoologists[8].

Numerous sensitive animals are known from the general vicinity of the property (Table 4). Some wide-ranging sensitive animals may occur onsite, at least on an occasional basis. This could include species of uncommon reptiles, such as Orange-throated Whiptail *(Aspidoscelis hyperythra)* and Coronado Skink *(Eumeces skiltonianus interparietalis)*. Sensitive birds known from the area include wide-ranging raptors, such as Cooper's Hawk *(Accipiter cooperii)*, Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), and others. Several species of sensitive mammals are also known from the vicinity, including various wide-ranging bats and other small species. However, due to the developed nature of most of the site, the degree of disturbance to the onsite native habitats, and their isolation from additional areas of native habitat, no highly sensitive animal species or significant populations of sensitive species are anticipated to occur onsite.

Two sensitive birds known from the vicinity that could occur onsite are the federally-listed "Threatened" California Gnatcatcher *(Polioptila californica)* and San Diego Cactus Wren *(Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis)*. Both species occur in habitat similar to that found onsite, although the patch size of the habitat available for California Gnatcatcher is very small. San Diego Cactus Wren could occur in some of the larger stands of Coast Cholla that are found in association with the onsite CSS. Both species are known to occur in various areas of National City.

Wetlands

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), CDFG, and California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB) all take jurisdiction over areas that qualify under their definitions of wetlands and "waters". In many cases, the boundaries of these jurisdictional lands coincide. The current definitions utilized by these agencies (collectively "Resource Agencies") with respect to wetlands regulation are as follows:

<u>Federal Wetlands Definitions</u>

The federal regulations that implement Section 404 of the CWA, which was enacted in 1972, define "wetlands" as follows[9]:

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[8] *California Department of Fish and Game, 2009, Special animals, Natural Diversity Data Base, State of California Resources Agency, Sacramento.*

[9] *Code of Federal Regulations, 2005, Title 40, Protection of Environment, Part 232.2, Definitions.*

"Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water (hydrology) at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation (hydrophytes) typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions (hydric soils). Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."

Federal jurisdictional wetlands that are regulated by the ACOE under Section 404 of the CWA must exhibit all three of the above characteristics: hydrology, hydrophytes, and hydric soils[10]. Areas that may function as wetlands ecologically, but exhibit one or two of the three characteristics, do not currently qualify as federal jurisdictional wetlands, thus activities in these wetlands are not regulated under Section 404.

The ACOE also regulates the discharge of dredge and/or fill material into "waters of the United States". The term "waters of the United States" is defined by Corps regulations as[11]:

1) *All waters that are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;*
2) *All interstate waters including interstate wetlands;*
3) *All other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate or foreign commerce including any such waters:*
   (i) which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes; or
   (ii) from which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce; or
   (iii) which are used or could be used for industrial purpose by industries in interstate commerce;
4) *All impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the United States under the definition;*
5) *Tributaries of waters identified in paragraphs (a)(1)-(4) of this section;*
6) *The territorial seas;*
7) *Wetlands adjacent to waters (other than waters that are themselves wetlands) identified in paragraphs (a)(1)-(6) of this section.*

The ACOE also takes jurisdiction in non-tidal waters when wetlands are not present according to the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). This is defined as:

"…that line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of

[10] *Environmental Laboratory, 1987, Corps of Engineers wetlands delineation manual, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington D.C.*
[11] *Code of Federal Regulations, 2005, Title 40, Protection of Environment, Part 232.2, Definitions.*

terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas."

State Wetland Definitions

According to the definition used by the CDFG[12], wetlands are *"lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water, "* and they exist where any one of the following conditions are present:

A) Predominantly undrained hydric soils (soils with low concentrations of oxygen in the upper layers during the growing season);

B) a predominance, at least periodically, of hydrophytic plants (plants that have adapted to the low availability of oxygen and others stresses in saturated soils);

C) a nonsoil substrate (such as a rocky shore) that is saturated with water or covered by shallow water each year at some point during the growing season.

California's version of CWA is the Porter-Cologne Act, which establishes the State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCB) to oversee use and protection of the "waters of the state". In California, all surface waters as well as groundwater are considered "waters of the state".

As mentioned above, a drainage feature begins near the center of the site and flows to the south, exiting the site at its southern boundary. Portions of the onsite drainage that are confined to a well-defined channel support DFWW and NVC. There is also a section of the drainage that is not channelized, where water sheet flows across the golf course, creating a wet, boggy area with large patches of sand. This area is within the historic floodplain of the adjoining creek.

The segments of the drainage that are mapped as DFWW and NVC likely qualify as state (CDFG) and federal (ACOE) "waters". The vegetated portion of the drainage may also qualify as state and federal wetlands. Although it does not currently exhibit well-defined bed and bank, the section of the drainage that is not channelized may also qualify as state and federal "waters", as it is clear that this area carries flow in that it connects the more well-defined segments of the drainage.

[12] *Cowardin, L.M., et. al., 1979, Classification of wetlands and deepwater habitats of the United States, U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Biological Services, Washington D.C.*

IMPACTS

Impacts to biological resources associated with the Las Palmas Park project are assessed as being either "significant" or "less than significant", as defined by CEQA. The determination of impact significance is based on one or all of the following criteria[13]:

- a substantial effect on a rare or endangered species of plant or animal or habitat of that species, or;
- a substantial interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or;
- a substantial reduction of habitat for fish, wildlife, or plants, or;
- a conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, or;
- a conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Anticipated impacts to habitats were calculated by determining the acreage of each habitat affected by the proposed site re-development. These are summarized in Table 2.

Measurable direct impacts would result from the development of the Las Palmas Park project site. Direct impacts result from the actual removal of habitat, plants, and animals from the site through grading, brushing, clearing, construction, etc. These direct impacts are considered permanent because they result in a conversion of habitats to development. Indirect impacts also affect habitats, plants, and/or animals residing on or near the project site. These are not the direct result of grading or development. Examples of indirect impacts include introduction of exotic species, human or pet intrusions into natural areas, lighting, traffic, and noise. Indirect impacts are often called "edge effects".

National City is not subject to the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, this guideline does not apply to the Las Palmas Park project.

The majority of National City's local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources concern lands designated as Open Space Reserves and/or biological resources associated with Paradise Marsh, Bannister Marsh, and the Sweetwater River. Because no such lands are found onsite, the Las Palmas Park project is not anticipated to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

[13] *California Code of Regulations, 2009, as amended, Title 14, Natural Resources, Division 6, Resources Agency, Chapter 3, Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act*

Direct Impacts

The following direct impacts are anticipated:

(1) Up to 1.2 acres of CSS could be impacted as a result of site re-development. The loss of this vegetation is considered **significant**, as defined by CEQA. Mitigation for this loss is required in order to reduce impacts to a level that is “less than significant”.

(2) Up to 0.8 acre of DFWW could be impacted as a result of site re-development. The loss of this vegetation is considered **significant**, as defined by CEQA. Mitigation for this loss is required in order to reduce impacts to a level that is “less than significant”.

(3) Up to 0.1 acre of NVC could be impacted as a result of site re-development. The loss of this resource is considered **significant**, as defined by CEQA. Mitigation for this loss is required in order to reduce impacts to a level that is “less than significant”.

(4) Up to 9.3 acres of NNG could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

(5) Up to 8.5 acres of NNV could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

(6) Up to 31.8 acres of U/D could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

Direct impacts associated with the subject project are presented in tabular format in Table 2.

Indirect Impacts

Due to the site’s high amount of human use and the fact that it is completely surrounded by development, all of the natural/naturalized habitats on the project site are already subject to edge effects. Therefore, any additional edge effects resulting from project implementation are considered **less than significant**.

MITIGATION

Implementation of the Las Palmas Park project will result in a direct loss of sensitive habitat and possibly sensitive species, as defined by CEQA. Mitigation is thus required to ensure there be no loss of sensitive habitat values or degradation of significant natural areas as a result of site development.

Impacts to CSS generally require mitigation at a 2-to-1 ratio. Therefore, impacts to 1.2 acres of CSS would require 2.4 acres of mitigation. This mitigation could occur onsite, via habitat creation and restoration in the Butterfly Garden and/or other areas of the site. In order for onsite habitat creation and restoration to be acceptable as CSS mitigation, these activities would need to occur pursuant to a City and Wildlife Agency (CDFG, USFWS) approved Revegetation Plan. Alternatively, mitigation could occur offsite, via the securement of 2.4 acre-credits of CSS in an approved mitigation bank. It should be noted that, due to the disturbed nature of much of the onsite CSS, a lower mitigation ratio, such as 1.5:1, may be acceptable to the City and Wildlife Agencies as providing adequate mitigation for CSS impacts.

Because the site supports habitat that is theoretically suitable for the federally-listed California Gnatcatcher, it may be necessary to obtain "take" authorization from the USFWS if this species is present on the project site. In order to determine presence/absence, protocol surveys of suitable areas of habitat (CSS) onsite are recommended. These must be completed by an approved biologist in possession of a Section 10(a) Recovery Permit for this species. The survey data are generally considered accurate for one year.

Impacts to wetlands habitats, such as DFWW and NVC, generally require mitigation at a 3-to-1 ratio. At least 1-to-1 of this typically must consist of wetlands creation; the remaining 2-to-1 may consist of wetlands restoration/enhancement. Therefore, impacts to 0.8 acre of DFWW would require 2.4 acres of mitigation and impacts to 0.1 acre of NVC would require 0.3 acre of mitigation. Mitigation for impacts to these habitat-types could occur onsite, via habitat creation and restoration activities in the onsite drainage. In order for these activities to be acceptable as wetlands mitigation, they would need to be subject to a City and Resource Agency-approved Wetland Mitigation Plan. Alternatively, mitigation could occur offsite, via the securement of 2.4 acre-credits of FWW and 0.3 acre-credits of NVC in an approved mitigation bank.

Because the project may impact state wetlands and state and federal "waters", it may be necessary to obtain certain regulatory agency permits as a condition of project approval. To that end, it is recommended that the applicant provide to the Director, Planning and Building Department proof of notification of the ACOE and CRWQCB regarding Clean Water Act Section 404/401 Permits, or evidence that such notification is not required. Also required prior to project approval shall be proof provided to the Director that the applicant has obtained a 1600-series Streambed Alteration Agreement with the CDFG, or proof that such an agreement is not required.

In order to ensure project compliance with the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code, site brushing, grading, and/or the removal of vegetation within 300 feet of any known migratory songbird nesting location will not be permitted during the spring/summer songbird breeding season, defined as from 15 February to 31 August of each year. Limiting activities to the non-breeding season will minimize chances for the incidental take of migratory songbirds or raptors. Should it be necessary to conduct brushing, grading, or other habitat-removal

activities during the songbird breeding season, a preconstruction nesting survey of all areas within 300 feet of the proposed activity will be required. The results of the survey will be provided in a report to the Director, Planning and Building Department and the Wildlife Agencies for concurrence with the conclusions and recommendations.

Figure 1. Site Location – Las Palmas Park Project

Portion of U.S.G.S. "National City, California" 7.5' Quad

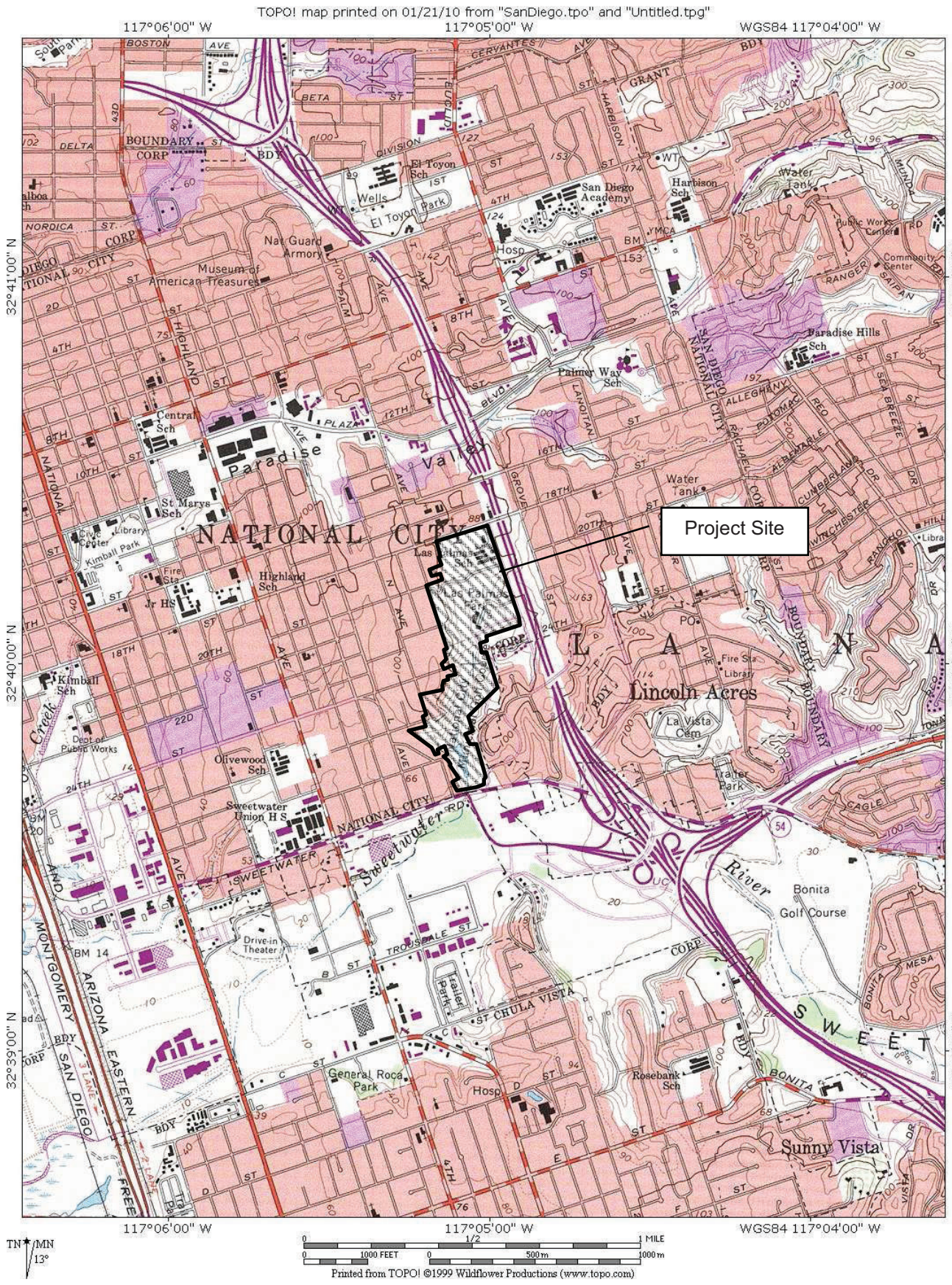

Figure 2. Aerial Photo – Las Palmas Park Project

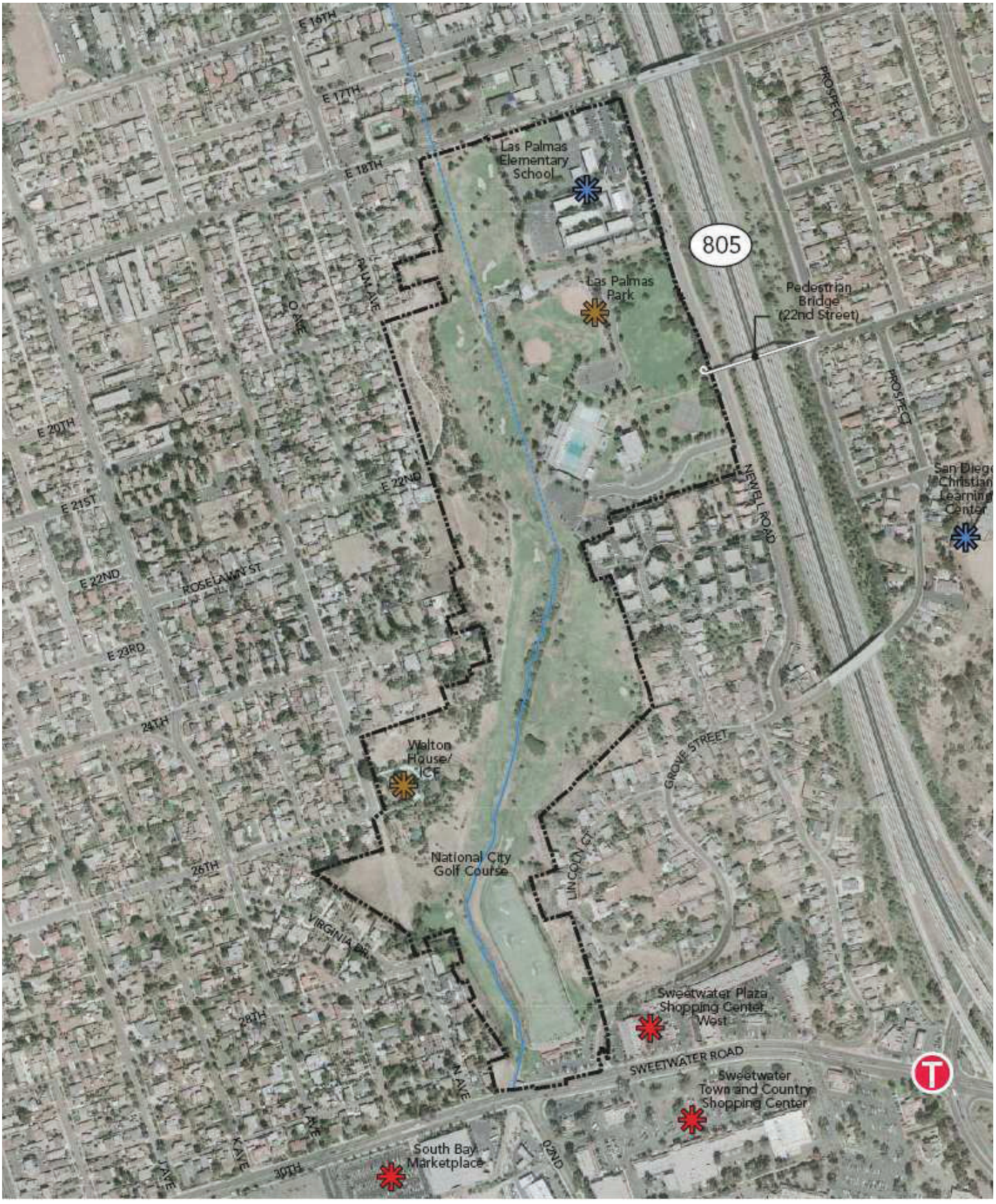

Figure 3. Biological Resources on Aerial Photo – Las Palmas Park Project

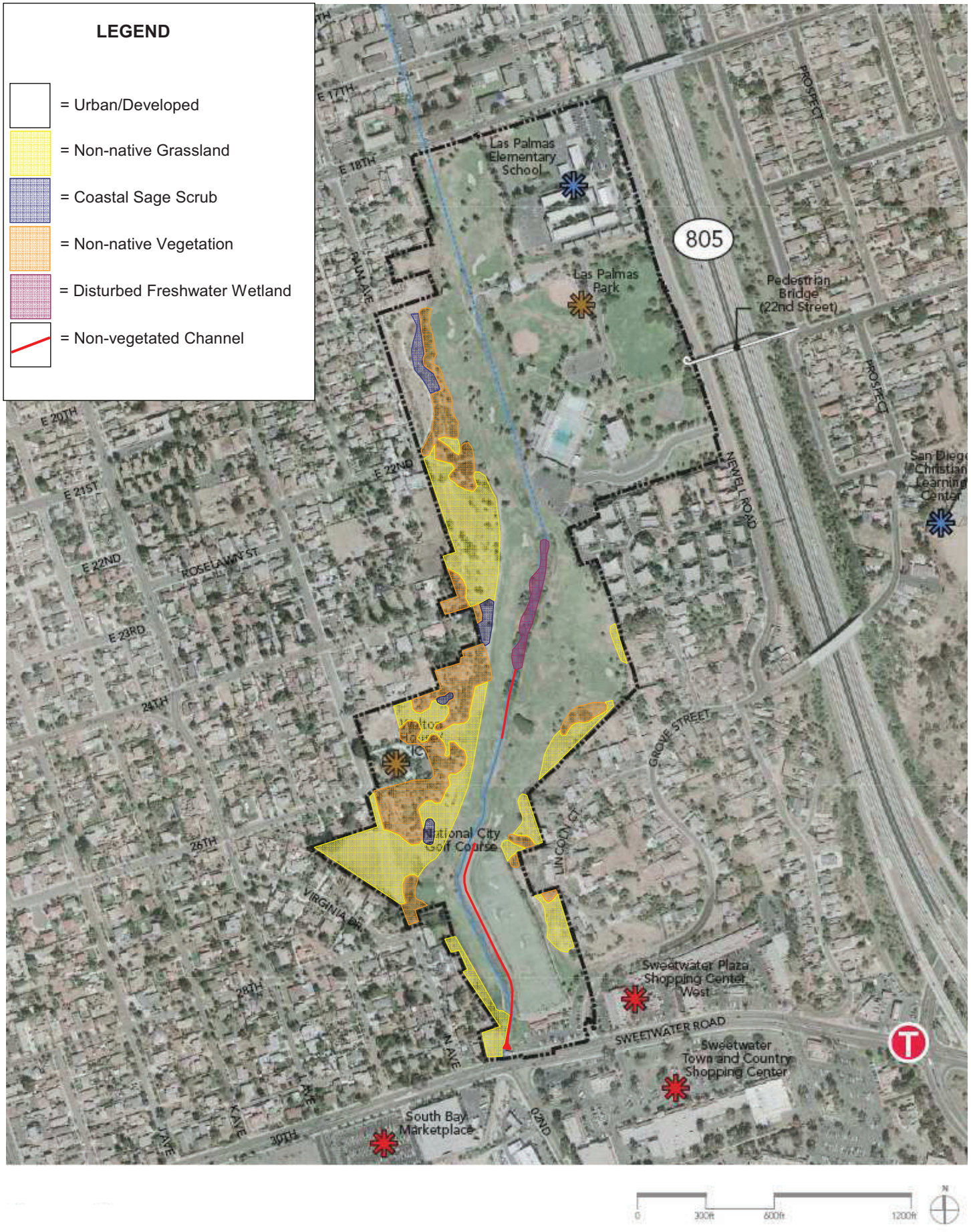

Figure 4. Site Design Concept – Las Palmas Park Project

Table 1. Flora and Fauna Observed – Las Palmas Park Project

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat
Plants		
Acacia sp *	Acacia	NNV
Amaranthus sp.	Tumbleweed	U/D
Ambrosia psilostachya	Western Ragweed	DFWW
Artemisia californica	California Sagebrush	CSS
Arundo donax *	Giant Wild Reed	DFWW
Atriplex semibaccata *	Australian Saltbush	U/D
Avena barbata *	Slender Wild Oat	NNG
Baccharis sarothroides	Broom Baccharis	CSS
Brassica geniculata *	Perennial Mustard	NNG
Bromus diandrus *	Ripgut Brome	NNG
Calystegia macrostegia	Morning Glory	CSS
Capsella bursa-pastoris *	Shepherd's Purse	DFWW
Carpobrotus edulis *	Hottentot Fig	NNV
Chrysanthemum coronarium *	Chrysanthemum	U/D
Coronopus didymus *	Swine Cress	U/D
Cynodon dactylon *	Bermuda Grass	U/D
Dichelostemma pulchellum	Blue Dicks	CSS
Encelia californica	California Encelia	CSS
Eriogonum fasciculatum	Flat-top Buckwheat	CSS
Erodium cicutarium *	Red-stem Stork's-bill	U/D
Foeniculum vulgare *	Wild Anise	DFWW
Gnaphalium beneolens	Cudweed	U/D
Gnaphalium canescens	Cudweed	CSS
Hedypnois cretica *	Hedypnois	NNG
Heteromeles arbutifolia	Toyon	CSS
Hordeum murinum *	Wild Barley	NNG
Limonium sp.	Sea Lavender	NNV
Lotus scoparius	Deerweed	CSS
Lupinus truncatus	Collar Lupine	CSS
Lycium californicum	**California Box-thorn**	**CSS**
Malosma laurina	Laurel Sumac	CSS
Malva parviflora *	Cheeseweed	U/D
Melilotus indicus *	Indian Sweet Clover	DFWW
Mesembryanthemum crystallinum	Ice Plant	U/D
Myoporum laetum *	Bastard Sandlewood	NNV
Olea europa *	European Olive	NNV
Opuntia ficus-indica *	Indian Fig	NNV
Opuntia sp. *	Prickly Pear	CSS
Opuntia prolifera	Coast Cholla	CSS
Oxalis pes-caprae *	Sorrel	U/D
Phoenix canariensis *	Canary Island Palm	DFWW
Picris echioides *	Bristly Ox-tongue	DFWW

Table 1. Flora and Fauna Observed – Las Palmas Park Project

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat
Plants, cont.		
Raphanus sativus *	Wild Radish	U/D
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonadeberry	CSS
Ricinus communis *	Castor Bean	DFWW
Rumex crispus *	Curly Dock	DFWW
Salix lasiolepis	Arroyo Willow	DFWW
Salsola pestifer *	Russian Thistle	U/D
Salvia apiana	White Sage	CSS
Salvia mellifera	Black Sage	CSS
Schinus molle *	Peruvian Peppertree	NNV
Simmondsia chinensis	Jojoba	CSS
Sisymbrium altissimum *	Tumble Mustard	U/D
Sisyrinchium bellum	Blue-eyed Grass	CSS
Sonchus oleraceus *	Sow Thistle	U/D
Stephanomeria virgata	Stephanomeria	CSS
Stipa pulchra	Purple Stipa	CSS
Tamarix sp. *	Salt Cedar	DFWW
Taraxacum officinale	Common Dandelion	U/D
Urtica urens *	Dwarf Nettle	DFWW
Viguiera laciniata	**San Diego County Viguiera**	**CSS**
Washingtonia robusta *	Mexican Fan Palm	DFWW
Yucca schidigera	Mojave Yucca	CSS
Birds		
Aphelocoma coerulescens	Scrub Jay	CSS
Archilochus anna	Anna's Hummingbird	CSS
Buteo jamaicensis	Red-tailed Hawk	U/D
Carduelis psaltria	Lesser Goldfinch	CSS
Carpodacus mexicanus	Housefinch	CSS
Corvus corax	Common Raven	U/D
Corvus brachyrhynchos	Common Crow	U/D
Dendrocopos nuttallii	Nuttall's Woodpecker	NNV
Dendroica coronata	Audubon's Warbler	NNV
Mimus polyglottos	Mockingbird	U/D
Passer domesticus	House Sparrow	U/D
Pipilo crissalis	California Towhee	CSS
Sayornis nigricans	Black Phoebe	NNV
Sayornis saya	Say's Phoebe	U/D
Zonotrichia leucophrys	White-crowned Sparrow	NNV

Table 1. Flora and Fauna Observed – Las Palmas Park Project

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat
Mammals		
Canis latrans	Coyote	CSS
Spermophilus beecheyi	California Ground Squirrel	U/D
Thomomys bottae	Valley Pocket Gopher	U/D

Total = 63 species of plant and 18 species of animal
* = non-native species
bold = sensitive species

Habitat codes:
U/D = Urban/Developed
CSS = Coastal Sage Scrub
NNG = Non-native Grassland
NNV = Non-native Vegetation
DFWW = Disturbed Freshwater Wetland

Table 2. Impact and Mitigation Analysis – Las Palmas Park Project

Biological Resource	Total Acres Onsite (Pre-development)	Acres Conserved (Post-development)	Acres Impacted (Post-development)	Mitigation Required
Urban/Developed	62.1	30.3	31.8	none
Coastal Sage Scrub	1.2	none	1.2	2.4 ac (1.2 ac @ 2:1)
Non-native Grassland	9.3	none	9.3	none
Non-native Vegetation	8.5	none	8.5	none
Disturbed Freshwater Wetland	0.8	none	0.8	2.4 (0.8 @ 3:1)
Non-vegetated Channel	0.1	none	0.1	0.3 (0.1 @ 3:1)
TOTAL	**82 ac**	**30.3 ac**	**51.7 ac**	**5.1 ac**

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Las Palmas Park

Species	Form	CNPS List	Federal/ State Status	Potential to Occur in Las Palmas Park
Adolphia californica California Adolphia	perennial deciduous shrub	List 2.1	None	Low
Ambrosia chenopodiifolia San Diego Bursage	perennial shrub	List 2.1	None	Low
Ambrosia monogyra Single-whorl Burrobrush	perennial shrub	List 2.2	None	Low
Ambrosia pumila San Diego Ambrosia	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Endangered	Low
Androsace elongata ssp. *acuta* California Androsace	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Aphanisma blitoides Aphanisma	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	None
Artemisia palmeri San Diego Sagewort	perennial deciduous shrub	List 4.2	None	Low
Astragalus deanei Dean's Milkvetch	perennial herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Atriplex coulteri Coulter's Saltbush	perennial herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Atriplex pacifica South Coast Saltscale	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Azolla mexicana Mexican Mosquito Fern	annual/perennial herb	List 4.2	None	None
Bergerocactus emoryi Golden-spined Cereus	perennial stem succulent	List 2.2	None	Low
Bloomeria clevelandii San Diego Goldenstar	perennial bulbiferous herb	List 1B.1	None	Low
Calandrinia breweri Brewer's Redmaid	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Calandrinia maritime Sea Kisses	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Las Palmas Park

Camissonia lewisii Lewis' Evening Primrose	annual herb	List 3	None	None
Convolvulus simulans Small-flowered Morning Glory	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Cordylanthus maritimus ssp.*maritimus* Salt Marsh Bird's Beak	annual herb hemiparasitic	List 1B.2	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	None
Deinandra conjugens Otay Tarplant	annual herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Threatened; CDFG Endangered	Low
Deinandra paniculata Paniculate Tarplant	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Dichondra occidentalis Western Dichondra	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Dudleya variegata Variegated Dudleya	perennial herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Ericameria palmeri var. *palmeri* Palmer's Ericameria	perennial evergreen shrub	List 1B.1	None	Low
Eryngium aristulatum var. *parishii* San Diego Button-celery	annual/perennial herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	None
Euphorbia misera Cliff Spurge	shrub	List 2.2	None	Low
Ferocactus viridescens Coast Barrel Cactus	perennial stem succulent	List 2.1	None	Low
Frankenia palmeri Palmer's Frankenia	perennial herb	List 2.1	None	None
Harpagonella palmeri Palmer's Grapplinghook	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Heterotheca sessiliflora ssp.*sessiliflora* Beach Golden-aster	perennial herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Holocarpha virgata ssp. *elongate* Graceful Tarplant	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Isocoma menziesii var. *decumbens* Decumbent Goldenbush	perennial shrub	List 1B.2	None	Low

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Las Palmas Park

Iva hayesiana San Diego Marsh-elder	perennial herb	List 2.2	None	Low
Juncus acutus ssp. *leopoldii* Southwestern Spiny Rush	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Lasthenia glabrata ssp. *coulteri* Coulter's Goldfields	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	Low
Lepidium virginicum var. *robinsonii* Robinson's Pepper-grass	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Lotus nuttallianus Nuttall's Lotus	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Lycium californicum California Box-thorn	perennial shrub	List 4.2	None	Observed
Microseris douglasii ssp.*platycarpha* Small-flowered Microseris	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Mucronea californica California Spineflower	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Nama stenocarpum Mud Nama	annual/perennial herb	List 2.2	None	None
Navarretia fossalis Spreading Navarretia	annual herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Threatened	None
Navarretia prostrate Prostrate Navarretia	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Nemacaulis denudata var. *denudate* Coast Woolly-heads	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	None
Ophioglossum californicum California Adder's-tongue	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Orobanche parishii ssp.*brachyloba* Short-lobed Broomrape	perennial herb parasitic	List 4.2	None	None
Pentachaeta aurea ssp. aurea Golden-rayed Pentachaeta	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Phacelia ramosissima var.*austrolitoralis* South Coast Branching Phacelia	perennial herb	List 4.2	None	None
Piperia cooperi Chaparral Rein Orchid	perennial herb	List 4.2	None	Low

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Las Palmas Park

Psilocarphus brevissimus var.*multiflorus* Delta Woolly-marbles	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Romneya coulteri Coulter's Matilija Poppy	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Opuntia californica var*. californica* Snake Cholla	perennial stem succulent	List 1B.1	None	Low
Selaginella cinerascens Ashy Spike-moss	rhizomatous herb	List 4.1	None	Low
Senecio astephanus San Gabriel Ragwort	perennial herb	List 4	None	None
Stemodia durantifolia Purple Stemodia	perennial herb	List 2.1	None	None
Suaeda esteroa California Seablite	perennial herb	List 1B.2	USFWS Endangered	None
Suaeda taxifolia Woolly Seablite	perennial evergreen shrub	List 4.2	None	None
Viguiera laciniata San Diego County Viguiera	perennial shrub	List 4.2	None	Observed

Table 4. Special Status Animal Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Las Palmas Park

Species	Form	Federal/State Status	Potential to Occur in Kimball Park
Accipiter cooperii Cooper's hawk	bird	CDFG WL	Moderate
Aimophila ruficeps canescens Southern California Rufous-crowned Sparrow	bird	CDFG WL	Low
Anniella pulchra pulchra Silvery Legless Lizard	reptile	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Antrozous pallidus Pallid Bat	mammal	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Aspidoscelis hyperythra Orange-throated Whiptail	reptile	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri Coastal Western Whiptail	reptile	None	Moderate
Branchinecta sandiegonensis San Diego Fairy Shrimp	invertebrate	USFWS Endangered	None
Branta bernicla Brant	bird	CDFG SSC	Low
Buteo lineatus Red-shouldered Hawk	bird	None	Moderate
Calypte costae Costa's Hummingbird	bird	None	Moderate
Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis San Diego Cactus Wren	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG SSC	Moderate
Carduelis lawrencei Lawrence's Goldfinch	bird	USFWS BCC	Moderate
Chaetodipus californicus femoralis Dulzura Pocket Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Chaetodipus fallax pallidus Pallid San Diego Pocket Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	Low
Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus Western Snowy Plover	bird	USFWS Threatened, BCC; CDFG SSC	Low

Table 4. Special Status Animal Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Las Palmas Park

Choeronycteris mexicana Mexican Long-tongued Bat	mammal	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Chondestes grammacus Lark Sparrow	bird	None	Moderate
Cicindela gabbii Western Tidal-flat Tiger Beetle	invertebrate	None	None
Cicindela latesignata latesignata Western Beach Tiger Beetle	invertebrate	None	None
Coleonyx variegatus abbotti San Diego Banded Gecko	reptile	None	Moderate
Danaus plexippus Monarch Butterfly	invertebrate	None	Moderate
Dendroica petechia brewsteri Yellow Warbler	bird	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Diadophis punctatus similis San Diego Ringneck Snake	reptile	None	Moderate
Elanus leucurus White-tailed Kite	bird	CDFG FP	Moderate
Empidonax traillii extimus Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	None
Eremophila alpestris actia California Horned Lark	bird	CDFG WL	Low
Eumeces skiltonianus interparietalis Coronado Skink	reptile	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Falco columbarius Merlin	bird	CDFG WL	Low
Hydroprogne caspia Caspian Tern	bird	USFWS BCC	None
Icteria virens Yellow-breasted Chat	bird	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Lanius ludovicianus Loggerhead Shrike	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG SSC	Moderate

Table 4. Special Status Animal Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Las Palmas Park

Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus California Black Rail	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG Threatened, FP	None
Neotoma lepida intermedia San Diego Desert Woodrat	mammal	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Onychomys torridus ramona Southern Grasshopper Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	Low
Pandion haliaetus Osprey	bird	CDFG WL	None
Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi Belding's savannah sparrow	bird	CDFG Endangered	None
Picoides nuttallii Nuttall's Woodpecker	bird	None	Moderate
Polioptila californica California Gnatcatcher	bird	USFWS Threatened; CDFG SSC	Moderate
Rallus longirostris levipes Light-footed Clapper Rail	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered, FP	None
Salvadora hexalepis virgultea Coast Patch-nosed Snake	reptile	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Scaphiopus hammondii Western Spadefoot Toad	amphibian	CDFG SSC	Low
Selasphorus sasin Allen's Hummingbird	bird	None	Moderate
Sterna forsteri Forster's Tern	bird	None	None
Sternula antillarum browni California Least Tern	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered, FP	None
Thalasseus elegans Elegant Tern	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG WL	None
Thamnophis hammondii Two-striped Garter Snake	reptile	CDFG SSC	Low

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A BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT FOR THE KIMBALL PARK CONCEPT PLAN CITY OF NATIONAL CITY CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTION

This report addresses biological resources, project impacts, and CEQA compliance for the proposed Kimball Park Concept Plan (hereafter "Kimball Park project"). The subject project proposes the re-development of portions of the existing Kimball Park, located in National City, California. The project site totals approximately 34 acres, of which approximately 15.5 acres will be subject to re-development. The Kimball Park project site is located south of East 12th Street, west of Kimball Way, north of East 16th Street, and east of National City Boulevard the City of National City, California (Figure 1).

PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The Kimball Park project proposes the re-development of approximately 15.5 acres of the existing Kimball Park and adjoining areas with neighborhood gardens, improvements and a trail associated with Paradise Creek, an improved skate park, a community gathering area, expansion of the Senior Village, a street closure park, and other improvements. The existing City Hall, library, Boys and Girls Club, cultural arts building, and Kimball Park recreational facilities are proposed to remain in their current states (Figure 4).

The Kimball Park project site consists of City Hall, which is located at the northwestern corner of the site, a library, located along the central western site boundary, a Boys and Girls Club, which is present near the southeastern corner of the site, Senior Village, located along the eastern site boundary, additional structures, playing fields, athletic courts, lawns, and parking lots. A segment of Paradise Creek crosses the site from northeast to southwest (Figures 2 & 4).

The Kimball Park project site is mostly flat, with a gentle northwest-facing slope at its southeastern corner and a gentle south-facing slope at its northwestern corner. The project site is completely surrounded by residential and commercial development; thus, it may be characterized as an "infill" project.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to inventory the property with respect to biological resources, identify and map the onsite habitats, and present a discussion of rare, endangered, threatened, or otherwise sensitive plants or animals that could occur onsite. These data have been used to assess the site's biological resource values. This analysis allows a determination of project-related direct and indirect impacts, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and mitigation, if appropriate and necessary. The property supports sensitive wetland vegetation, and impacts to this habitat will result in measurable losses of biological resource values that are considered "significant" pursuant to CEQA, necessitating mitigation.

METHODS

Biology field surveys of the Kimball Park project site were completed by the author and Julia Groebner, Associate Biologist, on 11 November 2009, 14 December 2009, 15 January 2010, and 2 March 2010. Weather conditions were conducive to field surveying on these dates, with overcast to clear skies, temperatures in the 60's and low 70's, and no appre ciable wind.

The site was examined on foot, and plants, animals, and habitats encountered were inventoried in the field. However, the fully developed areas of the site were not included in our field survey, and vegetation associated with the park's landscaping was not inventoried. The limits of each habitat-type were mapped in the field utilizing an aerial photograph of the property (Figure 3). Plants and animals identified in association with the site are listed in Table 1 at the end of this report.

Floral nomenclature used in this report follows Munz[1] and others. Plant communities, as designated by numerical code, follow Holland[2]. Wildlife observations were made opportunistically. Binoculars were used to aid in observations and all wildlife species detected were noted. Animal nomenclature used in this report is taken from Stebbins[3] for reptiles and amphibians, Peterson[4] for birds, and Jameson, *et. al*[5] and Burt, *et. al*[6] for mammals.

RESULTS

Most of the Kimball Park project site supports development or disturbed areas. However, some very small patches of native or naturalized habitat still remain on the site, including Disturbed Southern Coastal Salt Marsh, Non-native Grassland, and Disturbed Freshwater Wetland (Figure 3).

Urban/Developed (Holland Code 12000) – 31.8 acres

The majority of the Kimball Park project site is already developed with City Hall, a library, a Boys and Girls Club, associated structures, playing fields, athletic courts, lawns, and parking lots. All of these areas qualify as Urban/Developed. This habitat-type also completely surrounds the project site, in the form of roads, homes, and commercial development. Areas mapped as Urban/Developed are of little to no biological resource value.

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[1] *Munz, P.A., 1974, A flora of Southern California, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1086p.*

[2] *Holland, R.F., 1996, Preliminary descriptions of the terrestrial natural communities of California, State of California, Nongame-Heritage Program, 156p (amended).*

[3] *Stebbins, R.C., 1985, A field guide to western reptiles and amphibians, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 336p*

[4] *Peterson, R.T., 1966, A field guide to western birds, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1966, 366p.*

[5] *Jameson, E.W. and H.J. Peeters, 1988, California mammals, California Natural History Guides: 52, University of California Press, Berkeley.*

[6] *Burt, W.H. and R.P. Grossenheider, A field guide to the mammals, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1966, 289p.*

Disturbed Southern Coastal Salt Marsh (Holland Code 52120) – 0.1 acre

A segment of Paradise Creek crosses the project site, flowing from northeast to southwest. Although the majority of the watercourse is channelized in concrete, the westernmost portion supports narrow strips of Disturbed Southern Coastal Salt Marsh (DSCSM) vegetation along both banks, adjacent to the channel. This habitat-type is dominated by Pickleweed (*Salicornia* sp.), Desert Salt Grass (*Distichlis spicata*), American Saltwort (*Batis maritima*), Salty Susan (*Jaumea carnosa*), and other halophytes. Paradise Creek flows underground into a large box culvert at the southwestern corner of the project site, and the DSCSM therefore does not exhibit any direct offsite habitat connectivity. The DSCSM onsite is of low biological resource value, due to its very small size, degree of disturbance, and isolation from other areas of this habitat-type. This habitat-type is associated with a jurisdictional wetland and waters of the state and U.S.

Disturbed Freshwater Wetland (Holland Code 11200) – 0.3 acre

The central portion of Paradise Creek supports two discrete patches of Disturbed Freshwater Wetland (DFWW). These areas are dominated almost exclusively by Bulrush (*Scirpus* sp). At the time of the field survey, there was standing water and Mosquito Fish (*Gambusia affinis*) present in the westerly patch of DFWW, indicating perennial inundation. A larger area of DFWW is found in the easternmost portion of Paradise Creek, east of Kimball Way. This area is dominated by Cattails (*Typha* sp.), along with Mexican Fan Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*), Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), Giant Wild Reed (*Arundo donax*), and other non-native species. The DFWW onsite is of low to moderate biological resource value, due to its small size, degree of disturbance, and isolation from other areas of this wetland vegetation. This habitat-type is associated with a jurisdictional wetland and waters of the state/U.S.

Non-native Grassland (Holland Code 42200) – 0.7 acre

Non-native Grassland (NNG) is found at the southeastern corner of the site in areas supporting a dense thatch of naturalized non-native grasses and forbs. These areas appeared to be tilled annually, but are not maintained as lawns like the rest of the project site. The NNG is indicated by Ripgut Brome *(Bromus diandrus)*, Wild Oat (*Avena* sp.), Bermuda Grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), Cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), Red-stem Stork's-bill (*Erodium cicutarium*), and others. The biological resource value of NNG is low.

Disturbed Habitat (Holland Code 11300) – 0.9 acre

Ruderal areas of the site that are not currently maintained and that support weedy shrubs and forbs or bare dirt qualify as Disturbed Habitat (DH). Plant species found in the DH include Wild Anise (*Foeniculum vulgare*), Russian Thistle (*Salsola pestifer*), Bermuda Buttercup (*Oxalis pes-caprae*), Cheeseweed, and others. Although portions of the DH consist mainly of bare dirt, this habitat-type does not include dirt paths, the playing fields, or other areas that are considered part of the park itself. DH is of little to no biological resource value.

Plants

The plants observed on the Kimball Park project site typify the diversity normally found in disturbed

wetland and annual grassland habitats in this part of San Diego County. A total of thirty-four plant species were detected during the field surveys. A complete list of the plants detected can be found in Table 1, attached. This list would be expected to represent at least 80 percent of the naturalized plants occurring on this property. The balance (mostly ephemeral annuals and some perennials in low numbers) would be detectable in the summer or fall months.

Animals

Nine species of animals were observed using the project site. This relatively small number is due to the site's highly developed/disturbed nature. The animals that were detected onsite are common species, abundant in the site's general vicinity. Additional common animal species certainly occur onsite, on at least an occasional basis, but were not directly observed during the field surveys. Animals observed onsite are listed in Table 1, attached.

SENSITIVE RESOURCES

Sensitive Vegetation Communities

Vegetation communities (habitats) are generally considered "sensitive" if; *(a)* they are considered rare within the region by local experts, *(b)* they are known to support sensitive animal or plant species; and/or *(c)* they are known to serve as important wildlife corridors. These sensitive habitats are typically depleted throughout their known ranges, or are highly localized and/or fragmented.

The DSCSM and DFWW present on the project site are considered sensitive, in that impacts to these habitat-types would be regulated by the City pursuant to CEQA and by the resource agencies as jurisdictional wetlands. In terms of biological resource values, the habitat quality of the DSCSM and DFWW is limited by their small size, degree of disturbance, and isolation.

Sensitive Plants

No sensitive plant species were observed on the Kimball Park project site during the field surveys. Sensitive plants are those listed as "Rare", "Endangered", "Threatened", "of Special Concern", or otherwise considered noteworthy by California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the California Native Plant Society, or other conservation agencies, organizations, or local botanists[7].

Numerous sensitive plants are known from the general vicinity of the property (Table 3). Due to the

[7] *Tibor, D.P. and L.A. Vorobik, 2001, Inventory of rare and endangered vascular plants of California, California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, 387p.*

developed/disturbed nature of the site, it is unlikely that any of these sensitive plant species occur onsite.

Sensitive Animals

No sensitive animal species were detected on the subject property during the field survey. Sensitive animals are those listed as "Rare", "Endangered", "Threatened", "of Special Concern", or otherwise noteworthy by the CDFG, the USFWS, the National Audubon Society, or other conservation agencies, organizations, or local zoologists[8].

Numerous sensitive animals are known from the general vicinity of the property (Table 4). Some wide-ranging sensitive animals may occur onsite on an occasional basis. This could include various uncommon reptiles, such as Coronado Skink *(Eumeces skiltonianus interparietalis)* and others. Sensitive birds known from the area include wide-ranging raptors, such as Cooper's Hawk *(Accipiter cooperii)*, Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), and others. Several species of sensitive mammal are also known from the vicinity, including various wide-ranging bats and other small species. However, due to the developed nature of the majority of the site, its high amount of human use, and the small size, degree of disturbance, and isolation of the native and naturalized habitats onsite, no highly sensitive species or significant populations of sensitive species are anticipated to occur onsite.

Wetlands

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), CDFG, and California Regional Water Quality Control Board (CRWQCB) all take jurisdiction over areas that qualify under their definitions of wetlands and "waters". In many cases, the boundaries of these jurisdictional lands coincide. The current definitions utilized by these agencies (collectively "Resource Agencies") with respect to wetlands regulation are as follows:

Federal Wetlands Definitions

The federal regulations that implement Section 404 of the CWA, which was enacted in 1972, define "wetlands" as follows[9]:

"Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water (hydrology) at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation (hydrophytes) typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions (hydric soils). Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."

[8] *California Department of Fish and Game, 2009, Special animals, Natural Diversity Data Base, State of California Resources Agency, Sacramento.*

[9] *Code of Federal Regulations, 2005, Title 40, Protection of Environment, Part 232.2, Definitions.*

Federal jurisdictional wetlands that are regulated by the ACOE under Section 404 of the CWA must exhibit all three of the above characteristics: hydrology, hydrophytes, and hydric soils[10] Areas that may function as wetlands ecologically, but exhibit one or two of the three characteristics, do not currently qualify as federal jurisdictional wetlands, thus activities in these wetlands are not regulated under Section 404.

The ACOE also regulates the discharge of dredge and/or fill material into "waters of the United States". The term "waters of the United States" is defined by Corps regulations as[11]:

1) *All waters that are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide;*
2) *All interstate waters including interstate wetlands;*
3) *All other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams), mudflats, sand flats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes, or natural ponds, the use, degradation or destruction of which could affect interstate or foreign commerce including any such waters:*
   (i) which are or could be used by interstate or foreign travelers for recreational or other purposes; or
   (ii) from which fish or shellfish are or could be taken and sold in interstate or foreign commerce; or
   (iii) which are used or could be used for industrial purpose by industries in interstate commerce;
4) *All impoundments of waters otherwise defined as waters of the United States under the definition;*
5) *Tributaries of waters identified in paragraphs (a)(1)-(4) of this section;*
6) *The territorial seas;*
7) *Wetlands adjacent to waters (other than waters that are themselves wetlands) identified in paragraphs (a)(1)-(6) of this section.*

The ACOE also takes jurisdiction in non-tidal waters when wetlands are not present according to the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). This is defined as:

"…that line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas."

[10] *Environmental Laboratory, 1987, Corps of Engineers wetlands delineation manual, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington D.C.*
[11] *Code of Federal Regulations, 2005, Title 40, Protection of Environment, Part 232.2, Definitions.*

State Wetland Definitions

According to the definition used by the CDFG[12], wetlands are *"lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface, or the land is covered by shallow water, "* and they exist where any one of the following conditions are present:

A) Predominantly undrained hydric soils (soils with low concentrations of oxygen in the upper layers during the growing season);

B) a predominance, at least periodically, of hydrophytic plants (plants that have adapted to the low availability of oxygen and others stresses in saturated soils);

C) a nonsoil substrate (such as a rocky shore) that is saturated with water or covered by shallow water each year at some point during the growing season.

California's version of CWA is the Porter-Cologne Act, which established the State Water Resources Control Board and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) to oversee use and protection of the "waters of the state". In California, all surface waters and groundwater are considered "waters of the state".

Paradise Creek, an intermittent stream, crosses the site, flowing from northeast to southwest. The onsite portion of Paradise Creek begins at the northeastern corner of the property, where it flows through a fenced but unlined and densely vegetated channel. The creek is undergrounded between D Avenue and Kimball Way and flows through an open concrete channel over the rest of its length, from D Avenue to the southwestern corner of the site. Portions of the creek support DSCSM and DFWW. There were also areas of standing water in the concrete channel at the time of our site visit, and the presence of *Gambusia* suggests that this water is perennial.

The above-ground sections of Paradise Creek likely qualify as state and federal "waters". The vegetated portions of the creek may also qualify as state wetlands. The easternmost patch of DFWW may also qualify as federal wetlands, although it is unlikely that the remaining patches of DFWW would qualify as federal wetlands due to the presence of the concrete channel.

[12] *Cowardin, L.M., et. al., 1979, Classification of wetlands and deepwater habitats of the United States, U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Biological Services, Washington D.C.*

IMPACTS

Impacts to biological resources associated with the Kimball Park project are assessed as being either "significant" or "less than significant", as defined by CEQA. The determination of impact significance is based on one or all of the following criteria[13]:

- a substantial effect on a rare or endangered species of plant or animal or habitat of that species, or;
- a substantial interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or;
- a substantial reduction of habitat for fish, wildlife, or plants.
- a conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, or;
- a conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Anticipated impacts to habitats were calculated by determining the acreage of each habitat affected by the proposed site re-development. These are summarized in Table 2.

Measurable direct impacts would result from the development of the Kimball Park project site. Direct impacts result from the actual removal of habitat, plants, and animals from the site through grading, brushing, clearing, construction, etc. These direct impacts are considered permanent because they result in a conversion of habitats to development. Indirect impacts also affect habitats, plants, and/or animals residing on or near the project site. These are not the direct result of grading or development. Examples of indirect impacts include introduction of exotic species, human or pet intrusions into natural areas, lighting, traffic, and noise. Indirect impacts are often called "edge effects".

National City is not subject to the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, this guideline does not apply to the Kimball Park project.

The majority of National City's local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources concern lands designated as Open Space Reserves and/or biological resources associated with Paradise Marsh, Bannister Marsh, and the Sweetwater River. Because no such lands are found onsite, the Kimball Park project is not anticipated to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

[13] *California Code of Regulations, 2009, as amended, Title 14, Natural Resources, Division 6, Resources Agency, Chapter 3, Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act*

Direct Impacts

The following direct impacts are anticipated:

(1) Up to 0.1 acre of Disturbed Southern Coastal Salt Marsh could be impacted as a result of site re-development. The loss of this vegetation is considered **significant**, as defined by CEQA. Mitigation for this loss is required in order to reduce impacts to a level which is "less than significant".

(2) Up to 0.3 acre of Disturbed Freshwater Wetland could be impacted as a result of site re-development. The loss of this vegetation is considered **significant**, as defined by CEQA. Mitigation for this loss is required in order to reduce impacts to a level which is "less than significant".

(3) Up to 0.7 acre of Non-native Grassland could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

(4) Up to 0.8 acre of Disturbed Habitat could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

(5) Up to 13.5 acres of Urban/Developed habitat could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

(6) The project could impact jurisdictional wetlands and "waters". This impact is considered **significant**, as defined by CEQA. Mitigation for this loss is required in order to reduce impacts to a level which is "less than significant".

Direct impacts associated with the subject project are presented in tabular format in Table 2.

Indirect Impacts

Due to the site's high amount of human use and the fact that it is completely surrounded by development, all of the natural/naturalized habitats on the project site are already subject to substantial edge effects. Therefore, any additional edge effects resulting from project implementation are considered **less than significant**.

MITIGATION

Implementation of the Kimball Park project will result in a direct loss of sensitive habitats, as defined by CEQA. Mitigation is thus required to ensure there is no loss of sensitive habitat values or degradation of significant natural areas as a result of site development.

In general, impacts to wetlands habitats, such as DFWW and DSCSM, require mitigation at a 3-to-1 ratio. At least 1-to-1 of this ratio typically must consist of wetlands creation; the remaining 2-to-1 may consist of wetlands restoration/enhancement. Therefore, impacts to 0.3 acre of DFWW would require 0.9 acre of mitigation and impacts to 0.1 acre of DSCSM would require 0.3 acre of mitigation. Mitigation for impacts to these habitat-types could occur onsite, via the restoration of Paradise Creek, including the daylighting of the portion of the creek that is currently underground. The project's current conceptual design shows approximately 3.9 acres as being available for Paradise Creek improvements (Figure 4). In order for these improvements to be acceptable as wetlands mitigation, they would need to be subject to a City and Resource Agency-approved Wetland Mitigation Plan. Alternatively, mitigation could occur offsite, via the securement of 0.9 acre-credits of SCSM and 0.3 acre-credits of FWW in an approved wetland mitigation bank.

Because the project will impact state wetlands and state and federal "waters", it will likely be necessary to obtain certain regulatory agency permits as a condition of project implementation. To that end, it is recommended that the applicant provide to the Director, Planning and Building Department proof of notification of the ACOE and CRWQCB regarding Clean Water Act Section 404/401 Permits, or evidence that such notification is not required. Also required prior to project approval shall be proof provided to the Director that the applicant has obtained a 1600-series Streambed Alteration Agreement with the CDFG, or proof that such an agreement is not required.

In order to ensure project compliance with the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code, site brushing, grading, and/or the removal of vegetation within 300 feet of any known migratory songbird nesting location will not be permitted during the spring/summer songbird breeding season, defined as from 15 February to 31 August of each year. Limiting activities to the non-breeding season will minimize chances for the incidental take of migratory songbirds or raptors. Should it be necessary to conduct brushing, grading, or other habitat-removal activities during the songbird breeding season, a preconstruction nesting survey of all areas within 300 feet of the proposed activity will be required. The results of the survey will be provided in a report to the Director, Planning and Building Department and the Wildlife Agencies for concurrence with the conclusions and recommendations.

Figure 1. Site Location – Kimball Park Project

Portion of U.S.G.S. "National City, California" 7.5' Quad

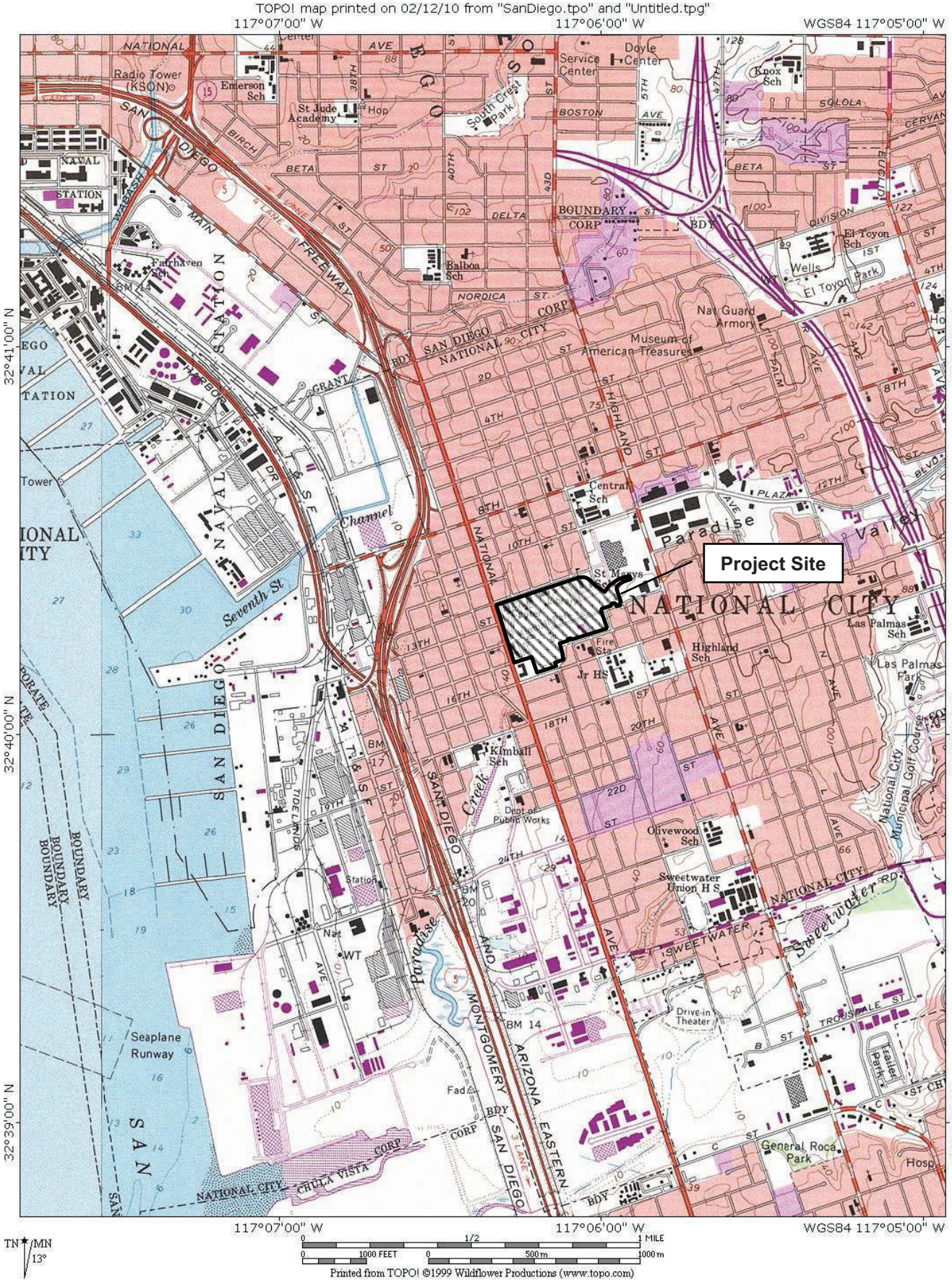


Figure 2. Aerial Photo – Kimball Park Project

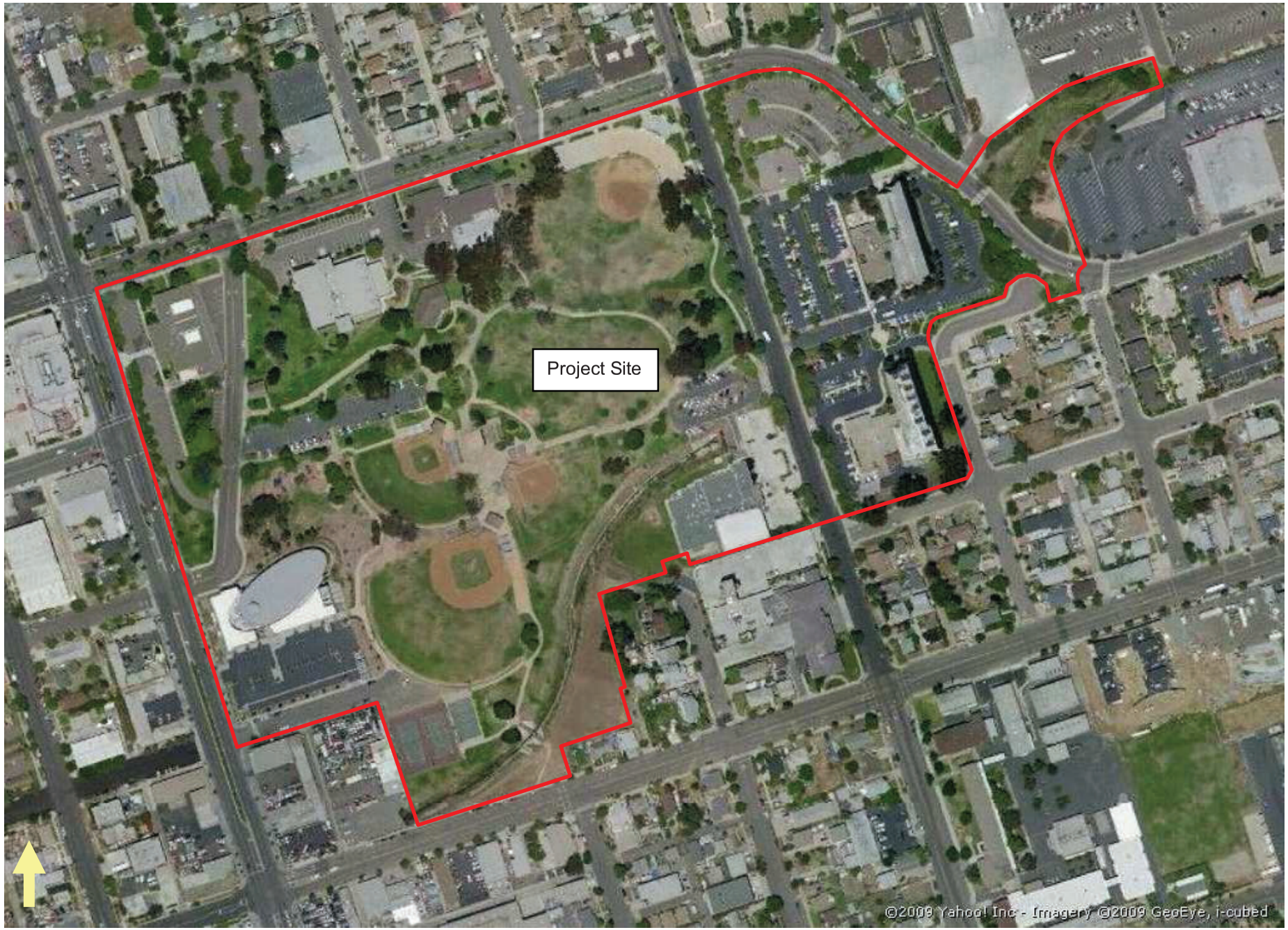


Figure 3. Biological Resources on Aerial Photo – Kimball Park Project

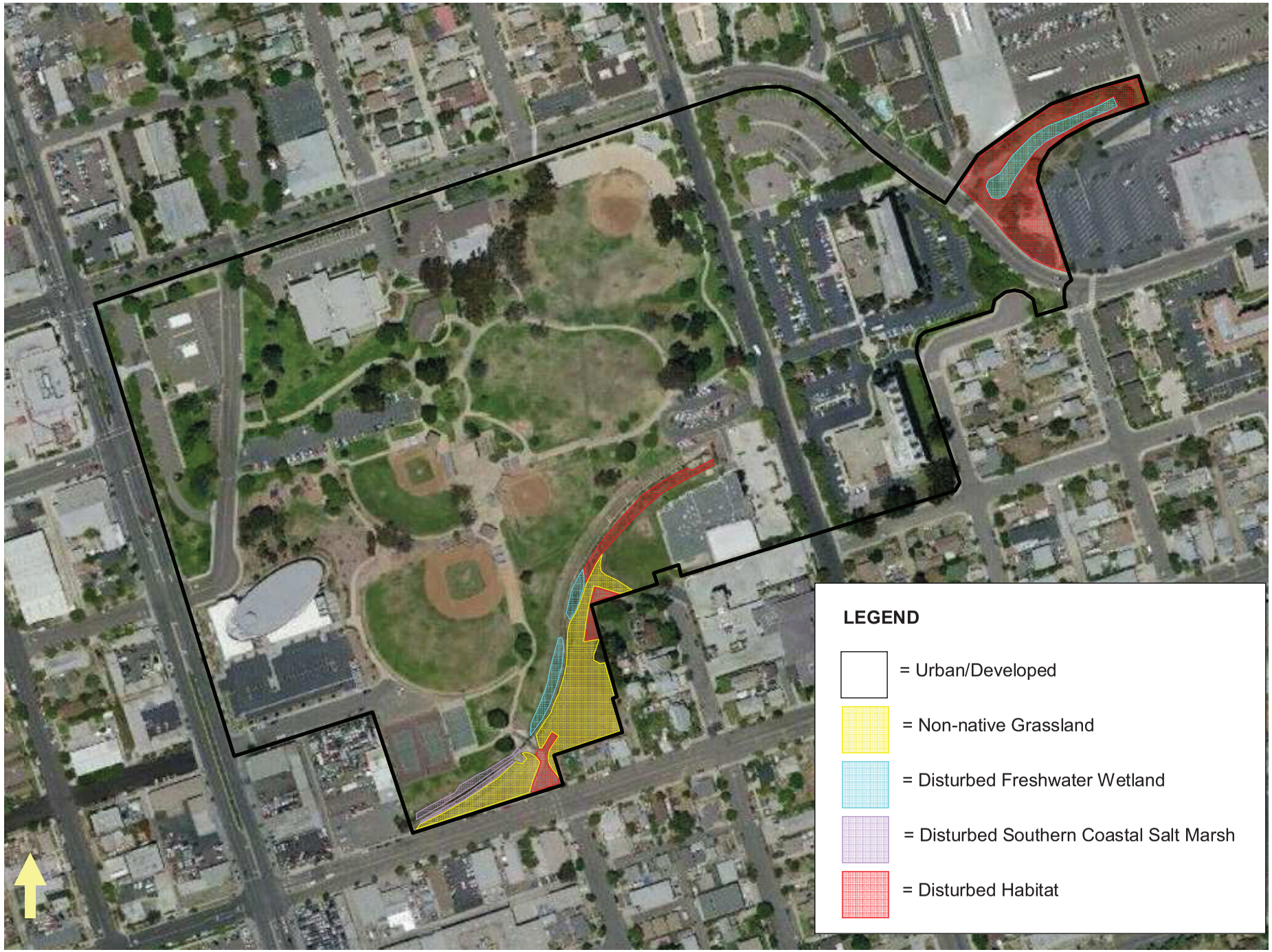
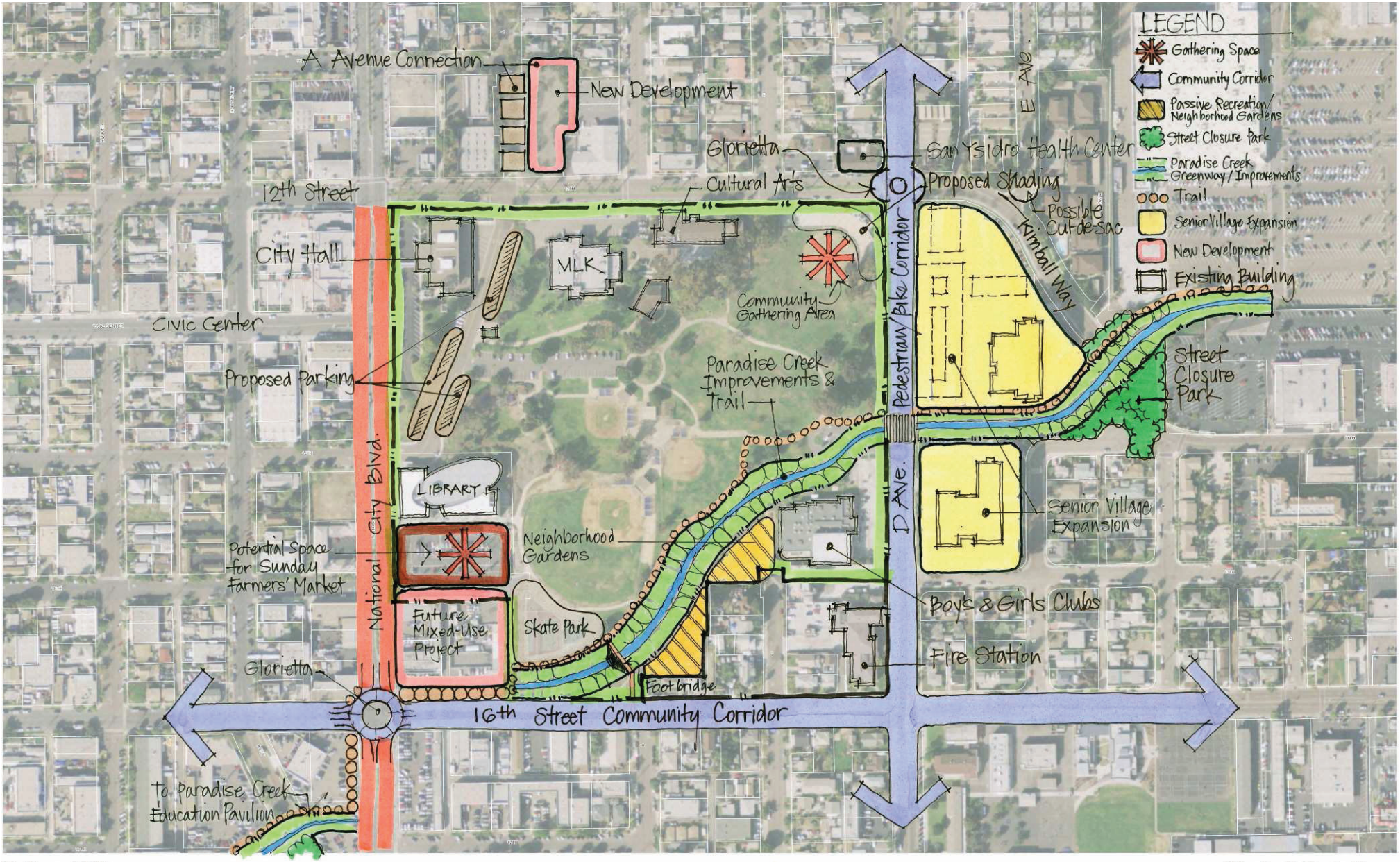


Figure 4. Site Design Concept – Kimball Park Project



National City **Kimball Park Base**

City of National City

PROJECT DESIGN CONSULTANTS
Planning | Landscape Architecture | Engineering | Survey

Table 1. Flora and Fauna Observed – Kimball Park Project

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat
Plants		
Ambrosia psilostachya	Western Ragweed	
Arundo donax *	Giant Wild Reed	DFWW
Atriplex patula	Spear Oracle	DSCSM
Atriplex semibaccata *	Australian Saltbush	DH
Avena sp. *	Wild Oat	NNG
Batis maritima	American Saltwort	DSCSM
Beta vulgaris ssp. *maritima* *	Sea Beet	DSCSM
Beta vulgaris var. cicla *	Chard	NNG
Bromus diandrus *	Ripgut Brome	NNG
Cotula australis *	Australian Brass Buttons	DFWW
Cuscuta salina	Salt Marsh Dodder	DSCSM
Cynodon dactylon *	Bermuda Grass	NNG
Distichlis spicata	Desert Salt Grass	DSCSM
Drosanthemum floribundum *	Rosea Iceplant	DSCSM
Erodium botrys *	Long-beaked Stork's-bill	NNG
Erodium cicutarium *	Red-stem Stork's-bill	NNG
Foeniculum vulgare *	Wild Anise	DH
Hordeum murinum *	Wild Barley	NNG
Jaumea carnosa	Salty Susan	DSCSM
Lavatera cretica *	Malva Rosa	DH
Malva parviflora *	Cheeseweed	DH, NNG
Medicago polymorpha *	Bur Clover	DH
Oxalis pes-caprae *	Bermuda Buttercup	DH
Phoenix canariensis *	Canary Island Palm	DFWW
Polypogon monspeliensis *	Rabbitfoot Grass	DFWW
Rumex crispus *	Curly Dock	DFWW
Salicornia sp.	Pickleweed	DSCSM
Salsola pestifer *	Russian Thistle	DH
Scirpus sp.	Bulrush	DFWW
Sisymbrium altissimum *	Tumble Mustard	DH
Sonchus oleraceus *	Sow Thistle	DH
Taraxacum officinale *	Common Dandelion	NNG, DH
Typha sp.	Cattails	DFWW
Washingtonia robusta *	Mexican Fan Palm	DFWW
Fish		
Gambusia affinis *	Mosquito Fish	DFWW
Birds		
Anas platyrhynchos	Mallard	DSCSM
Archilochus costae	Costa's Hummingbird	U/D
Carpodacus mexicanus	Housefinch	U/D

Table 1. Flora and Fauna Observed – Kimball Park Project (cont)

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat
Birds, cont.		
Corvus brachyrhynchos	Common Crow	U/D
Corvus corax	Common Raven	DH
Egretta thula	Snowy Egret	DFWW
Larus sp.	Gull	U/D
Sayornis nigricans	Black Phoebe	DH

Total = 34 species of plants and 9 species of animals
* = non-native species

Habitat codes:
DSCSM = Disturbed Southern Coastal Salt Marsh
DFWW = Disturbed Freshwater Wetland
NNG = Non-native Grassland
DH = Disturbed Habitat
U/D = Urban/Developed

Table 2. Impact and Mitigation Analysis – Kimball Park Project

Biological Resource	Total Acres Onsite (Pre-development)	Acres Conserved (Post-development)	Acres Impacted (Post-development)	Mitigation Required
Urban/Developed	31.8	none	13.5	none
Non-native Grassland	0.7	none	0.7	none
Disturbed Habitat	0.9	none	0.9	none
Disturbed Southern Coastal Salt Marsh	0.1	none	0.1	0.3 ac (0.1 ac @ 3:1)
Disturbed Freshwater Wetland	0.3	none	0.3	0.9 ac (0.3 ac @ 3:1)
TOTAL	**33.8 ac**	**16.3 ac**	**15.5 ac**	**0.12 ac**

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Kimball Park

Species	Form	CNPS List	Federal/ State Status	Potential to Occur in Kimball Park
Adolphia californica California Adolphia	perennial deciduous shrub	List 2.1	None	None
Ambrosia chenopodiifolia San Diego Bursage	perennial shrub	List 2.1	None	None
Ambrosia monogyra Single-whorl Burrobrush	perennial shrub	List 2.2	None	Low
Ambrosia pumila San Diego Ambrosia	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Endangered	Low
Androsace elongata ssp. *acuta* California Androsace	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Aphanisma blitoides Aphanisma	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Artemisia palmeri San Diego Sagewort	perennial deciduous shrub	List 4.2	None	None
Astragalus deanei Dean's Milkvetch	perennial herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Atriplex coulteri Coulter's Saltbush	perennial herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Atriplex pacifica South Coast Saltscale	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Azolla mexicana Mexican Mosquito Fern	annual/perennial herb	List 4.2	None	None
Bergerocactus emoryi Golden-spined Cereus	perennial stem succulent	List 2.2	None	None
Bloomeria clevelandii San Diego Goldenstar	perennial bulbiferous herb	List 1B.1	None	Low
Calandrinia breweri Brewer's Redmaid	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Calandrinia maritime Sea Kisses	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Kimball Park

Camissonia lewisii Lewis' Evening Primrose	annual herb	List 3	None	None
Convolvulus simulans Small-flowered Morning Glory	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Cordylanthus maritimus ssp.*maritimus* Salt Marsh Bird's Beak	annual herb hemiparasitic	List 1B.2	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	Low
Deinandra conjugens Otay Tarplant	annual herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Threatened; CDFG Endangered	Low
Deinandra paniculata Paniculate Tarplant	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Dichondra occidentalis Western Dichondra	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Dudleya variegata Variegated Dudleya	perennial herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Ericameria palmeri var. *palmeri* Palmer's Ericameria	perennial evergreen shrub	List 1B.1	None	None
Eryngium aristulatum var. *parishii* San Diego Button-celery	annual/perennial herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	None
Euphorbia misera Cliff Spurge	shrub	List 2.2	None	None
Ferocactus viridescens Coast Barrel Cactus	perennial stem succulent	List 2.1	None	None
Frankenia palmeri Palmer's Frankenia	perennial herb	List 2.1	None	Low
Harpagonella palmeri Palmer's Grapplinghook	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Heterotheca sessiliflora ssp.*sessiliflora* Beach Golden-aster	perennial herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Holocarpha virgata ssp. elongate Graceful Tarplant	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Isocoma menziesii var. *decumbens* Decumbent Goldenbush	perennial shrub	List 1B.2	None	Low

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Kimball Park

Iva hayesiana San Diego Marsh-elder	perennial herb	List 2.2	None	Low
Juncus acutus ssp. *leopoldii* Southwestern Spiny Rush	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Lasthenia glabrata ssp. *coulteri* Coulter's Goldfields	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	Low
Lepidium virginicum var. *robinsonii* Robinson's Pepper-grass	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	None
Lotus nuttallianus Nuttall's Lotus	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Lycium californicum California Box-thorn	perennial shrub	List 4.2	None	None
Microseris douglasii ssp.*platycarpha* Small-flowered Microseris	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Mucronea californica California Spineflower	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Nama stenocarpum Mud Nama	annual/perennial herb	List 2.2	None	Low
Navarretia fossalis Spreading Navarretia	annual herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Threatened	None
Navarretia prostrate Prostrate Navarretia	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Nemacaulis denudata var. *denudate* Coast Woolly-heads	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	None
Ophioglossum californicum California Adder's-tongue	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Orobanche parishii ssp.*brachyloba* Short-lobed Broomrape	perennial herb parasitic	List 4.2	None	None
Pentachaeta aurea ssp. aurea Golden-rayed Pentachaeta	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Phacelia ramosissima var.*austrolitoralis* South Coast Branching Phacelia	perennial herb	List 4.2	None	None

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Kimball Park

Piperia cooperi Chaparral Rein Orchid	perennial herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Psilocarphus brevissimus var.*multiflorus* Delta Woolly-marbles	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Romneya coulteri Coulter's Matilija Poppy	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Opuntia californica var*. californica* Snake Cholla	perennial stem succulent	List 1B.1	None	None
Selaginella cinerascens Ashy Spike-moss	rhizomatous herb	List 4.1	None	None
Senecio astephanus San Gabriel Ragwort	perennial herb	List 4	None	None
Stemodia durantifolia Purple Stemodia	perennial herb	List 2.1	None	Low
Suaeda esteroa California Seablite	perennial herb	List 1B.2	USFWS Endangered	Low
Suaeda taxifolia Woolly Seablite	perennial evergreen shrub	List 4.2	None	Low
Viguiera laciniata San Diego County Viguiera	perennial shrub	List 4.2	None	None

Table 4. Special Status Animal Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Kimball Park

Species	Form	Federal/State Status	Potential to Occur in Kimball Park
Accipiter cooperii Cooper's hawk	bird	CDFG WL	Moderate
Aimophila ruficeps canescens Southern California Rufous-crowned Sparrow	bird	CDFG WL	None
Anniella pulchra pulchra Silvery Legless Lizard	reptile	CDFG SSC	Low
Antrozous pallidus Pallid Bat	mammal	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Aspidoscelis hyperythra Orange-throated Whiptail	reptile	CDFG SSC	None
Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri Coastal Western Whiptail	reptile	None	None
Branchinecta sandiegonensis San Diego Fairy Shrimp	invertebrate	USFWS Endangered	None
Branta bernicla Brant	bird	CDFG SSC	Low
Buteo lineatus Red-shouldered Hawk	bird	None	Moderate
Calypte costae Costa's Hummingbird	bird	None	Low
Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis San Diego Cactus Wren	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG SSC	None
Carduelis lawrencei Lawrence's Goldfinch	bird	USFWS BCC	Moderate
Chaetodipus californicus femoralis Dulzura Pocket Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	None
Chaetodipus fallax pallidus Pallid San Diego Pocket Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	None
Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus Western Snowy Plover	bird	USFWS Threatened, BCC; CDFG SSC	Low

Table 4. Special Status Animal Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Kimball Park

Choeronycteris mexicana Mexican Long-tongued Bat	mammal	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Chondestes grammacus Lark Sparrow	bird	None	Moderate
Cicindela gabbii Western Tidal-flat Tiger Beetle	invertebrate	None	Low
Cicindela latesignata latesignata Western Beach Tiger Beetle	invertebrate	None	None
Coleonyx variegatus abbotti San Diego Banded Gecko	reptile	None	None
Danaus plexippus Monarch Butterfly	invertebrate	None	Moderate
Dendroica petechia brewsteri Yellow Warbler	bird	CDFG SSC	Low
Diadophis punctatus similis San Diego Ringneck Snake	reptile	None	Moderate
Elanus leucurus White-tailed Kite	bird	CDFG FP	Moderate
Empidonax traillii extimus Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	None
Eremophila alpestris actia California Horned Lark	bird	CDFG WL	Low
Eumeces skiltonianus interparietalis Coronado Skink	reptile	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Falco columbarius Merlin	bird	CDFG WL	Low
Hydroprogne caspia Caspian Tern	bird	USFWS BCC	Low
Icteria virens Yellow-breasted Chat	bird	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Lanius ludovicianus Loggerhead Shrike	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG SSC	Moderate

Table 4. Special Status Animal Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in Kimball Park

Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus California Black Rail	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG Threatened, FP	None
Neotoma lepida intermedia San Diego Desert Woodrat	mammal	CDFG SSC	None
Onychomys torridus ramona Southern Grasshopper Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	None
Pandion haliaetus Osprey	bird	CDFG WL	None
Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi Belding's savannah sparrow	bird	CDFG Endangered	None
Picoides nuttallii Nuttall's Woodpecker	bird	None	Low
Polioptila californica californica California Gnatcatcher	bird	USFWS Threatened; CDFG SSC	None
Rallus longirostris levipes Light-footed Clapper Rail	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered, FP	None
Salvadora hexalepis virgultea Coast Patch-nosed Snake	reptile	CDFG SSC	None
Scaphiopus hammondii Western Spadefoot Toad	amphibian	CDFG SSC	None
Selasphorus sasin Allen's Hummingbird	bird	None	Low
Sterna forsteri Forster's Tern	bird	None	Low
Sternula antillarum browni California Least Tern	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered, FP	Low
Thalasseus elegans Elegant Tern	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG WL	Low
Thamnophis hammondii Two-striped Garter Snake	reptile	CDFG SSC	Low
Vireo bellii pusillus Least Bell's Vireo	bird	USFWS Endangered, BCC; CDFG Endangered	None

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A BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES SURVEY REPORT FOR THE EL TOYON PARK CONCEPT PLAN CITY OF NATIONAL CITY CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTION

This report addresses biological resources, project impacts, and CEQA compatibility for the proposed El Toyon Park Concept Plan (hereafter "El Toyon Park project"). The subject project proposes the re-development of portions of the existing El Toyon Park, located in National City, California. The subject property totals approximately 39 acres, of which approximately 18 will be subject to re-development. The El Toyon Park project site is located south of East Division Street, east of the I-805 Freeway, west of Euclid Avenue, and north of East 4th Street in the City of National City, California (Figure 1).

PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION

The El Toyon Park project proposes the re-development of approximately 18 acres of the existing El Toyon Park and adjoining lands with recreation facilities, a farmer's market area, neighborhood gardens, a potential street closure park, a dog park, a trail, and other improvements. The existing Rancho de la Nacion and El Toyon Elementary Schools and some of the existing El Toyon Park recreational facilities are proposed to remain in their current states (Figure 4).

The El Toyon Park project site consists of the Rancho de la Nacion and El Toyon Elementary Schools, which are located on the northern portion of the site, and the El Toyon Park recreational facilities and associated improvements, which form the remainder of the site (Figures 2 & 4).

The majority of the site is flat, although the baseball diamond on the southwest portion of the site is surrounded by gentle to moderate slopes. The project site is completely surrounded by residential and commercial development; thus, it may be characterized as an "infill" project.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study was to inventory the property with respect to biological resources, identify and map the onsite habitats, and present a discussion of rare, endangered, threatened, or otherwise sensitive plants or animals that could occur onsite. These data have been used to assess the site's biological resource values. This analysis allows a determination of project-related direct and indirect impacts, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and mitigation, if appropriate and necessary.

METHODS

Biology field surveys of the El Toyon Park project site were completed by the author and Julia Groebner, Associate Biologist, on 11 November 2009, 14 December 2009, 15 January 2010, and 2 March 2010.

Weather conditions were conducive to field surveying on these dates, with overcast to clear skies, temperatures in the 60's and low 70's, and no appre ciable wind.

The site was examined on foot, and plants, animals, and habitats encountered were inventoried in the field. However, the fully developed areas of the site were not included in our field survey, and vegetation associated with the park's landscaping was not inventoried. The limits of each habitat-type were mapped in the field utilizing an aerial photograph of the property (Figure 3). Plants and animals identified in association with the site are listed in Table 1 at the end of this report.

Floral nomenclature used in this report follows Munz[1] and others. Plant communities, as designated by numerical code, follow Holland[2]. Wildlife observations were made opportunistically. Binoculars were used to aid in observations and all wildlife species detected were noted. Animal nomenclature used in this report is taken from Stebbins[3] for reptiles and amphibians, Peterson[4] for birds, and Jameson, *et. al*[5] and Burt, *et. al*[6] for mammals.

RESULTS

Most of the El Toyon Park project site supports development and associated landscaping. However, several other habitat-types are found onsite, including Non-native Grassland, Non-native Vegetation, and Disturbed Habitat (Figure 3).

Urban/Developed (Holland Code 12000) – 31.6 acres

The majority of the El Toyon Park project site is already developed with the Rancho de la Nacion and El Toyon Elementary Schools, a baseball diamond, athletic courts, accessory structures, lawns, paved roads, and parking lots. All of these areas qualify as Urban/Developed. This habitat-type also completely surrounds the project site, in the form of roads, homes, and businesses. Areas mapped as Urban/Developed are of little to no biological resource value.

Non-native Grassland (Holland Code 42200) – 1.5 acres

Non-native Grassland (NNG) is found in several patches along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site in areas supporting a dense thatch of naturalized non-native grasses and forbs. These areas may

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[1] *Munz, P.A., 1974, A flora of Southern California, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1086p.*

[2] *Holland, R.F., 1996, Preliminary descriptions of the terrestrial natural communities of California, State of California,Nongame-Heritage Program, 156p (amended).*

[3] *Stebbins, R.C., 1985, A field guide to western reptiles and amphibians, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 336p*

[4] *Peterson, R.T., 1966, A field guide to western birds, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1966, 366p.*

[5] *Jameson, E.W. and H.J. Peeters, 1988, California mammals, California Natural History Guides: 52, University of California Press, Berkeley.*

[6] *Burt, W.H. and R.P. Grossenheider, A field guide to the mammals, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1966, 289p.*

be tilled occasionally, but are not maintained as lawns like other parts of the project site. The NNG is indicated by Ripgut Brome *(Bromus diandrus)*, Wild Oat (*Avena* sp.), and other annual weeds. The biological resource value of NNG is low.

Non-native Vegetation (Holland Code 11000) – 2.7 acres

Non-native Vegetation (NNV) is present on the eastern half of the site in areas that are characterized by dense landscaping. This habitat-type is indicated by Eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* sp.), Acacia (*Acacia* sp.), Bastard Sandlewood (*Myoporum laetum*), and Peruvian Pepper-tree (*Schinus molle*) over an understory of Nodding Iceplant (*Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum*), various other annual forbs and grasses, and other weedy species. This habitat-type is of low biological resource value.

Disturbed Habitat (Holland Code 11300) – 2.8 acres

Ruderal areas of the site that are currently not maintained and that support a sparse cover of weedy species qualify as supporting Disturbed Habitat (DH). Plant species found in the DH include Cheeseweed (*Malva parviflora*), Red-stem Stork's-bill (*Erodium cicutarium*), and others. Portions of the DH consist mainly of bare dirt; however, this habitat-type does not include the track, playing fields, or other areas that are considered part of the park itself. DH is of little to no biological resource value.

Plants

A total of twenty-six plant species were detected during the field survey of this site. The plants observed on the El Toyon Park project site typify the diversity normally found in annual grassland and non-native/disturbed areas in this part of San Diego County. A complete list of the plants detected can be found in Table 1, attached. This list is expected to represent at least 80 percent of the naturalized plants occurring on this property. The balance (mostly ephemeral annuals and possibly some perennials in low numbers) would be detectable in the summer or fall months.

Animals

Five species of animal were observed using the project site. This small number is due to the site's highly developed/disturbed nature. The most common animal onsite by far is California Ground Squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*); in fact, the site appears to be infested by this species, with scores of specimens observed in the western portion of the property. Additional common animal species certainly occur onsite, on at least an occasional basis, but were not directly observed during the field surveys. Animals observed onsite are listed in Table 1, attached.

SENSITIVE RESOURCES

Sensitive Vegetation Communities

Vegetation communities (habitats) are generally considered "sensitive" if; *(a)* they are considered rare within the region by local experts, *(b)* they are known to support sensitive animal or plant species; and/or *(c)* they are known to serve as important wildlife corridors. These sensitive habitats are typically depleted throughout their known ranges, or are highly localized and/or fragmented.

None of the habitats present on the project site are considered sensitive. Impacts to the onsite habitat-types are not regulated by the City pursuant to CEQA.

Sensitive Plants

No sensitive plant species were observed on the El Toyon Park project site during the field surveys. Sensitive plants are those listed as "Rare", "Endangered", "Threatened", "of Special Concern", or otherwise considered noteworthy by California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the California Native Plant Society, or other conservation agencies, organizations, or local botanists[7].

Numerous sensitive plants are known from the general vicinity of the El Toyon Park project site (Table 3). Due to the developed/disturbed nature of the property, it is unlikely that any of these sensitive plant species occur onsite in any significant numbers.

Sensitive Animals

No sensitive animal species were detected on the subject property during the field surveys. Sensitive animals are those listed as "Rare", "Endangered", "Threatened", "of Special Concern", or otherwise noteworthy by the CDFG, the USFWS, the National Audubon Society, or other conservation agencies, organizations, or local zoologists[8].

Numerous sensitive animals are known from the general vicinity of the property (Table 4). Some wide-ranging sensitive animals may occur onsite on an occasional basis. This could include various uncommon reptiles, such as Coronado Skink *(Eumeces skiltonianus interparietalis)* and others. Sensitive birds known from the area include wide-ranging raptors, such as Cooper's Hawk *(Accipiter cooperii)*, Red-shouldered Hawk (*Buteo lineatus*), and others. Several species of sensitive mammals are also known from the

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[7] *Tibor, D.P. and L.A. Vorobik, 2001, Inventory of rare and endangered vascular plants of California, California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, 387p.*

[8] *California Department of Fish and Game, 2009, Special animals, Natural Diversity Data Base, State of California Resources Agency, Sacramento.*

vicinity, including various wide-ranging bats and other small species. However, due to the developed/disturbed nature of the majority of the site and its high amount of human use, no highly sensitive species or significant populations of sensitive species are anticipated to occur onsite.

Wetlands

Wetlands and jurisdictional "waters" are not present on the project site. The site does not support hydrophytes, hydric soils, or wetlands hydrology. Furthermore, we saw no drainages that support a "bed-and-bank", an ordinary high water mark, or any other signs of jurisdictional wetlands or "waters".

IMPACTS

Impacts to biological resources associated with the El Toyon Park project are assessed as being either "significant" or "less than significant", as defined by CEQA. The determination of impact significance is based on one or all of the following criteria[9]:

- a substantial effect on a rare or endangered species of plant or animal or habitat of that species, or;
- a substantial interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or;
- a substantial reduction of habitat for fish, wildlife, or plants.
- a conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, or;
- a conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Anticipated impacts to habitats were calculated by determining the acreage of each habitat affected by the proposed re-development. These are summarized in Table 2.

Measurable direct impacts would result from the development of the El Toyon Park project site. Direct impacts result from the actual removal of habitat, plants, and animals from the site through grading, brushing, clearing, and construction. These direct impacts are considered permanent, because they result in a conversion of habitats to developed areas. Indirect impacts also affect habitats, plants, and/or animals residing on or near the project site. These are not the direct result of grading or development. Examples of indirect impacts include introduction of exotic species, human or pet intrusions into natural areas, lighting, traffic, and noise. Indirect impacts are often called "edge effects".

National City is not subject to the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan. Therefore, this

[9] *California Code of Regulations, 2009, as amended, Title 14, Natural Resources, Division 6, Resources Agency, Chapter 3, Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act.*

guideline does not apply to the El Toyon Park project.

The majority of National City's local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources concern lands designated as Open Space Reserves and/or biological resources associated with Paradise Marsh, Bannister Marsh, and the Sweetwater River. Because no such lands are found onsite, the El Toyon Park project is not anticipated to conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

Direct Impacts

The following direct impacts are anticipated:

(1) Up to 13.3 acres of Urban/Developed habitat could be impacted as a result of site re-development. The loss of this vegetation is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

(2) Up to 1.5 acres of Non-native Grassland could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

(3) Up to 2.7 acres of Non-native Vegetation could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

(4) Up to 2.8 acres of Disturbed Habitat could be lost as a result of site re-development. This impact is considered **less than significant**, as defined by CEQA. No specific mitigation for this loss is required.

Direct impacts associated with the subject project are presented in tabular format in Table 2.

Indirect Impacts

Because the site does not support any areas of natural habitat, indirect impacts resulting from project implementation are not anticipated.

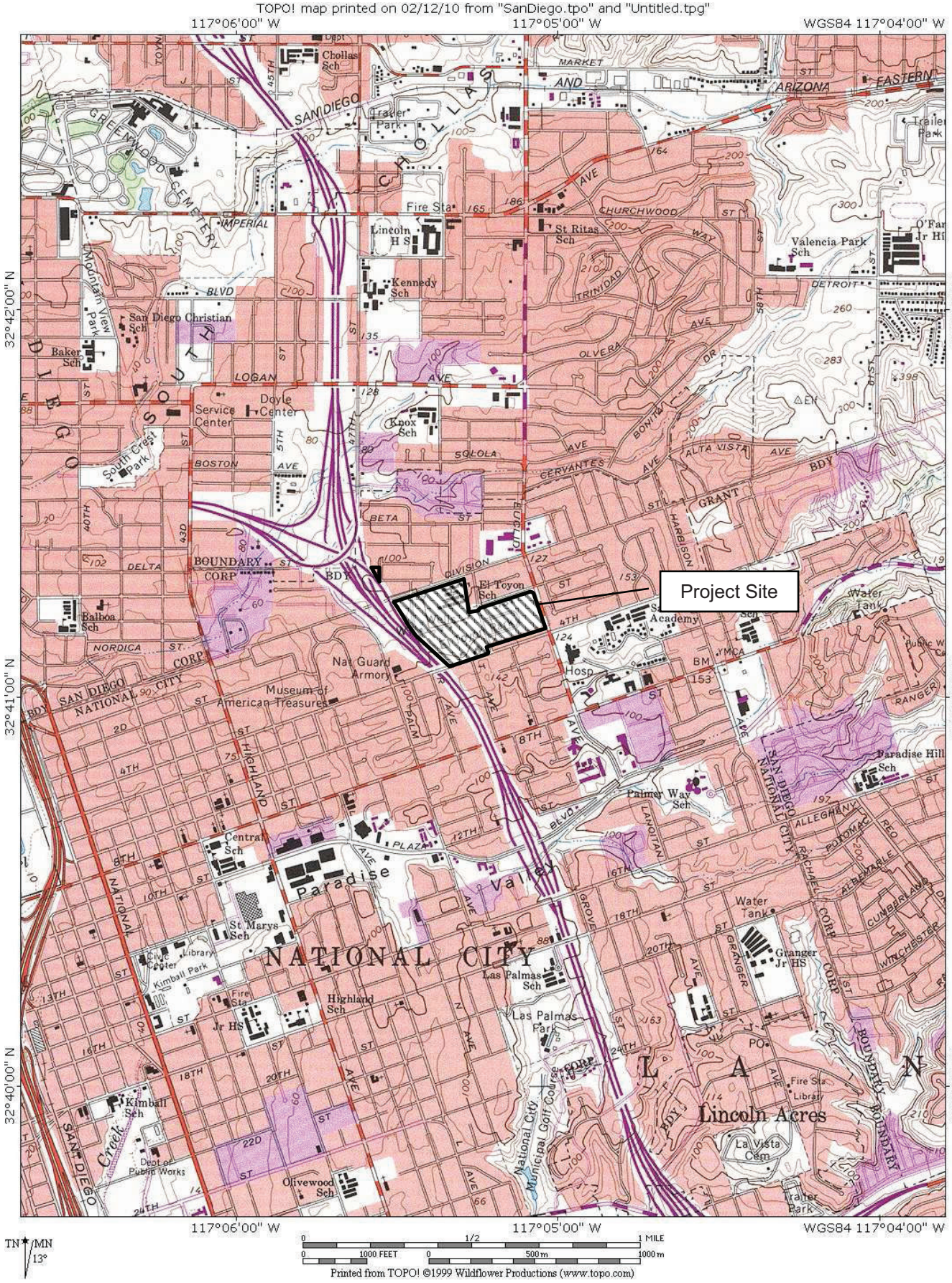
MITIGATION

As currently proposed, the El Toyon project will not result in significant impacts to biological resources. Therefore, no mitigation is required at this time.

In order to ensure project compliance with the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Sections 3503, 3503.5, 3511, and 3513 of the California Fish and Game Code, site brushing, grading, and/or the removal of vegetation within 300 feet of any known migratory songbird nesting location will not be permitted during the spring/summer songbird breeding season, defined as from 15 February to 31 August of each year. Limiting activities to the non-breeding season will minimize chances for the incidental take of migratory songbirds or raptors. Should it be necessary to conduct brushing, grading, or other habitat-removal activities during the songbird breeding season, a preconstruction nesting survey of all areas within 300 feet of the proposed activity will be required. The results of the survey will be provided in a report to the Director, Planning and Building Department and the Wildlife Agencies for concurrence with the conclusions and recommendations.

Figure 1. Site Location – El Toyon Park Project

Portion of U.S.G.S. "National City, California" 7.5' Quad



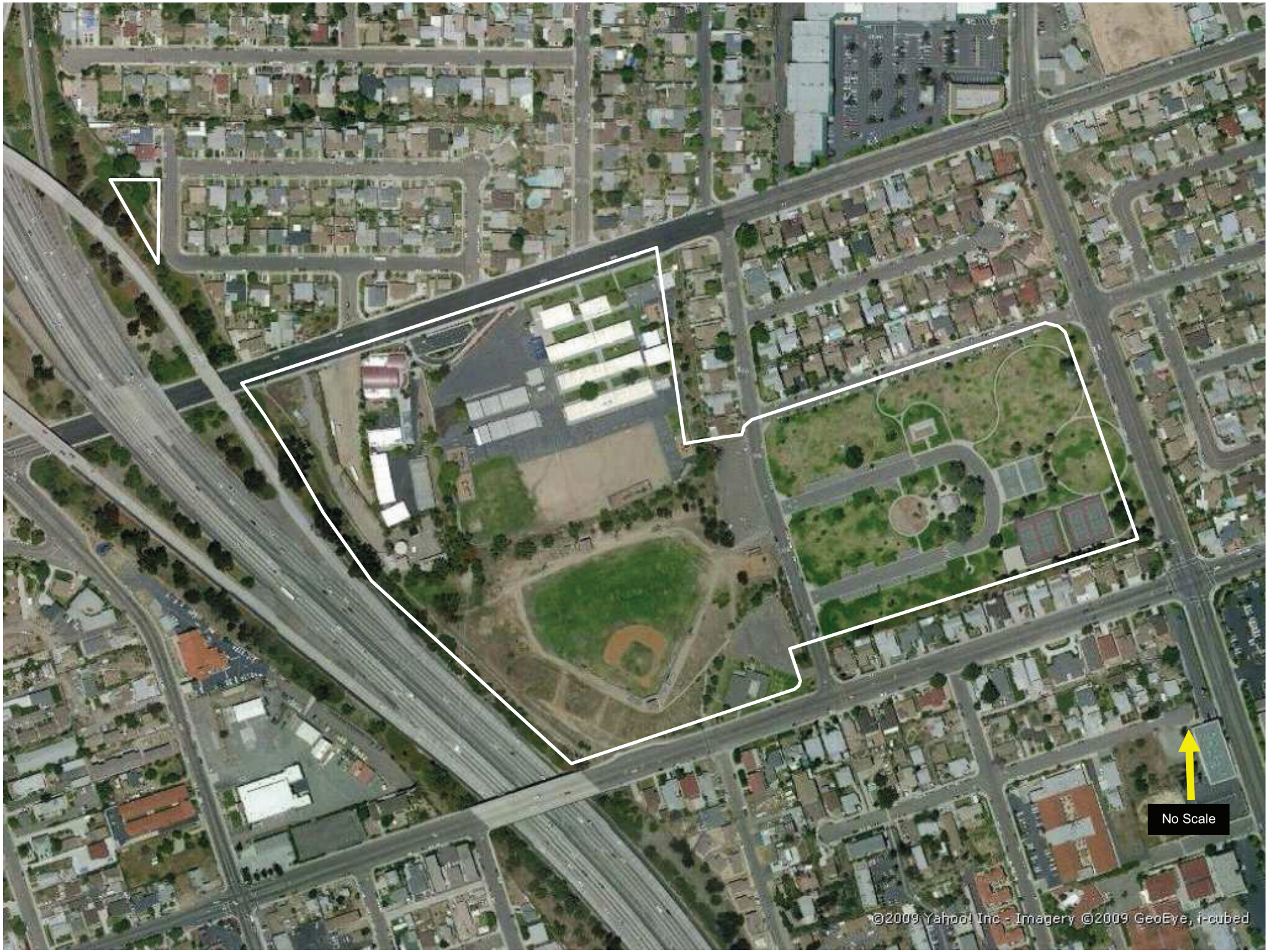

No Scale
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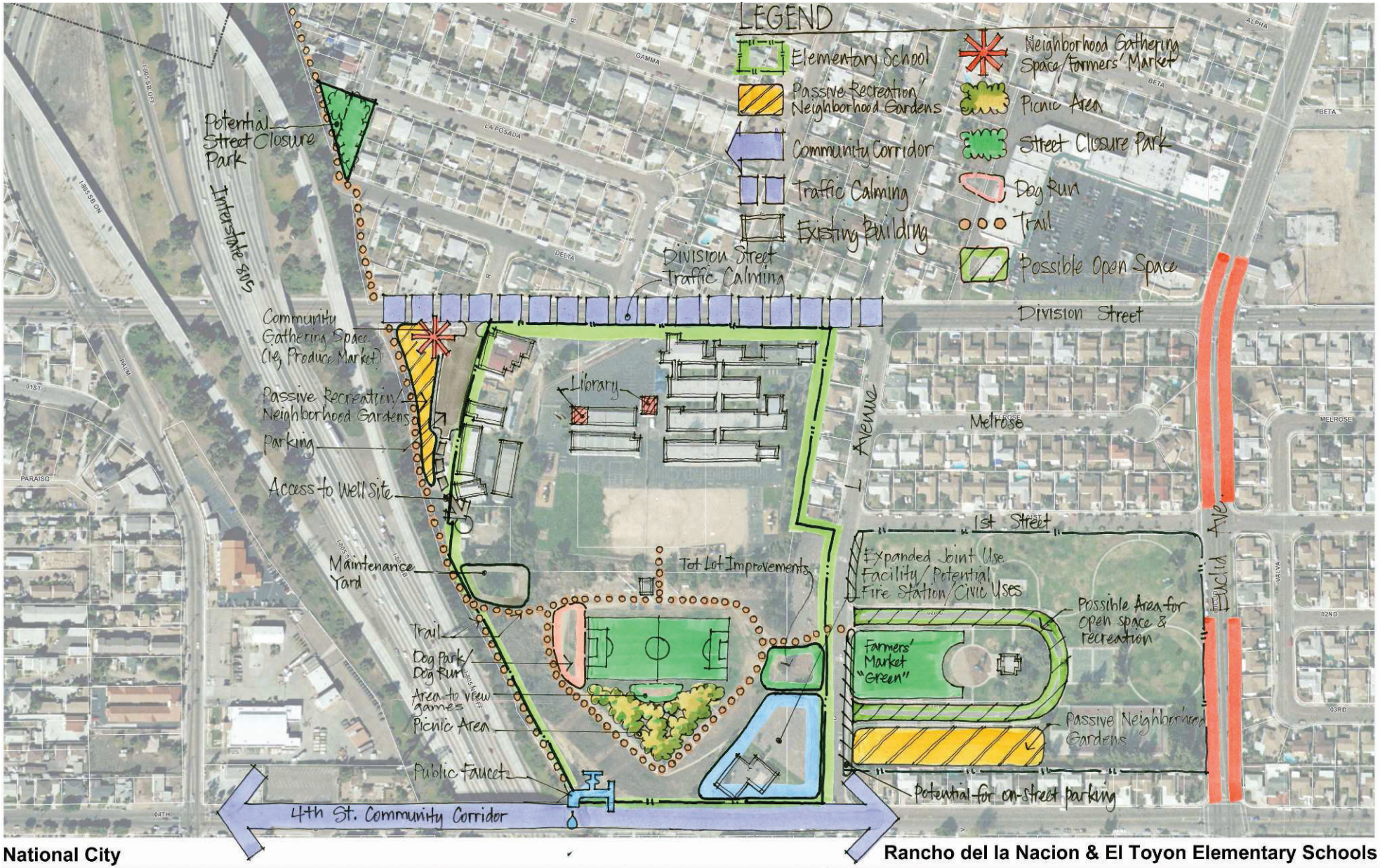
Figure 3. Biological Resources on Aerial Photo – El Toyon Park Project

Figure 4. Site Design Concept – El Toyon Park Project



National City — **Rancho del la Nacion & El Toyon Elementary Schools**

City of National City

PROJECT DESIGN CONSULTANTS
Planning · Landscape Architecture · Engineering · Survey

Table 1. Flora and Fauna Observed – El Toyon Park Project

Scientific Name	Common Name	Habitat
Plants		
Acacia sp. *	Acacia	NNV
Ambrosia psilostachya	Western Ragweed	NNG
Atriplex semibaccata *	Australian Saltbush	NNG
Avena sp. *	Wild Oat	NNG
Bromus diandrus *	Ripgut Brome	NNG
Chenopodium murale *	Goosefoot	NNV
Coronopus didymus *	Swine Cress	DH
Cyperus sp *	Sedge	DH
Erodium cicutarium *	Red-stem Stork's-bill	NNG
Erodium moschatum *	White-stem Stork's-bill	DH
Eucalyptus sp. *	Eucalyptus	NNV
Hordeum murinum *	Wild Barley	NNG
Isocoma menziesii	Coastal Goldenbush	DH
Lotus scoparius	Deerweed	DH
Malva parviflora *	Cheeseweed	DH
Melilotus indicus *	Indian Sweet Clover	DH
Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum *	Nodding Iceplant	NNV
Myoporum laetum *	Bastard Sandlewood	NNV
Raphanus sativus *	Wild Radish	DH
Rhus integrifolia	Lemonadeberry	NNV
Rumex crispus *	Curly Dock	DH
Salsola pestifer *	Russian Thistle	DH
Schinus molle *	Peruvian Peppertree	NNV
Schismus barbatus *	Schismus	NNV
Sisymbrium altissimum *	Tumble Mustard	DH
Sonchus oleraceus *	Sow Thistle	DH
Birds		
Archilochus anna	Anna's Hummingbird	NNV
Carpodacus mexicanus	Housefinch	NNV
Falco sparverius	American Kestrel	NNG
Sayornis nigricans	Black Phoebe	NNG
Mammals		
Spermophilus beecheyi	California Ground Squirrel	DH

Total = 26 species of plant and 5 species of animal

* = non-native species

Habitat codes:

NNG = Non-native Grassland; NNV = Non-native Vegetation; DH = Disturbed Habitat

Table 2. Impact and Mitigation Analysis – El Toyon Park Project

Biological Resource	Total Acres Onsite (Pre-development)	Acres Conserved (Post-development)	Acres Impacted (Post-development)	Mitigation Required
Urban/Developed	31.6	18.3	13.3	none
Non-native Grassland	1.5	none	1.5	none
Non-native Vegetation	2.7	none	2.7	none
Disturbed Habitat	2.8	none	2.8	none
TOTAL	**38.6**	**18.3**	**20.3**	**none**

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park

Species	Form	CNPS List	Federal/ State Status	Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park
Adolphia californica California Adolphia	perennial deciduous shrub	List 2.1	None	None
Ambrosia chenopodiifolia San Diego Bursage	perennial shrub	List 2.1	None	None
Ambrosia monogyra Single-whorl Burrobrush	perennial shrub	List 2.2	None	None
Ambrosia pumila San Diego Ambrosia	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Endangered	Low
Androsace elongata ssp. *acuta* California Androsace	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Aphanisma blitoides Aphanisma	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Artemisia palmeri San Diego Sagewort	perennial deciduous shrub	List 4.2	None	None
Astragalus deanei Dean's Milkvetch	perennial herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Atriplex coulteri Coulter's Saltbush	perennial herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Atriplex pacifica South Coast Saltscale	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	Low
Azolla mexicana Mexican Mosquito Fern	annual/perennial herb	List 4.2	None	None
Bergerocactus emoryi Golden-spined Cereus	perennial stem succulent	List 2.2	None	None
Bloomeria clevelandii San Diego Goldenstar	perennial bulbiferous herb	List 1B.1	None	Low
Calandrinia breweri Brewer's Redmaid	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Calandrinia maritime Sea Kisses	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park

Camissonia lewisii Lewis' Evening Primrose	annual herb	List 3	None	None
Convolvulus simulans Small-flowered Morning Glory	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Cordylanthus maritimus ssp.*maritimus* Salt Marsh Bird's Beak	annual herb hemiparasitic	List 1B.2	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	None
Deinandra conjugens Otay Tarplant	annual herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Threatened; CDFG Endangered	Low
Deinandra paniculata Paniculate Tarplant	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Dichondra occidentalis Western Dichondra	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Dudleya variegata Variegated Dudleya	perennial herb	List 1B.2	None	None
Ericameria palmeri var. *palmeri* Palmer's Ericameria	perennial evergreen shrub	List 1B.1	None	None
Eryngium aristulatum var. *parishii* San Diego Button-celery	annual/perennial herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	None
Euphorbia misera Cliff Spurge	shrub	List 2.2	None	None
Ferocactus viridescens Coast Barrel Cactus	perennial stem succulent	List 2.1	None	None
Frankenia palmeri Palmer's Frankenia	perennial herb	List 2.1	None	None
Harpagonella palmeri Palmer's Grapplinghook	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Heterotheca sessiliflora ssp.*sessiliflora* Beach Golden-aster	perennial herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Holocarpha virgata ssp. elongate Graceful Tarplant	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Isocoma menziesii var. *decumbens* Decumbent Goldenbush	perennial shrub	List 1B.2	None	Low

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park

Iva hayesiana San Diego Marsh-elder	perennial herb	List 2.2	None	None
Juncus acutus ssp. *leopoldii* Southwestern Spiny Rush	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Lasthenia glabrata ssp. *coulteri* Coulter's Goldfields	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Lepidium virginicum var. *robinsonii* Robinson's Pepper-grass	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	None
Lotus nuttallianus Nuttall's Lotus	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Lycium californicum California Box-thorn	perennial shrub	List 4.2	None	None
Microseris douglasii ssp.*platycarpha* Small-flowered Microseris	annual herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Mucronea californica California Spineflower	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Nama stenocarpum Mud Nama	annual/perennial herb	List 2.2	None	None
Navarretia fossalis Spreading Navarretia	annual herb	List 1B.1	USFWS Threatened	None
Navarretia prostrate Prostrate Navarretia	annual herb	List 1B.1	None	None
Nemacaulis denudata var. *denudate* Coast Woolly-heads	annual herb	List 1B.2	None	None
Ophioglossum californicum California Adder's-tongue	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Orobanche parishii ssp.*brachyloba* Short-lobed Broomrape	perennial herb parasitic	List 4.2	None	None
Pentachaeta aurea ssp. aurea Golden-rayed Pentachaeta	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Phacelia ramosissima var.*austrolitoralis* South Coast Branching Phacelia	perennial herb	List 4.2	None	None

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park

Piperia cooperi Chaparral Rein Orchid	perennial herb	List 4.2	None	Low
Psilocarphus brevissimus var.*multiflorus* Delta Woolly-marbles	annual herb	List 4.2	None	None
Romneya coulteri Coulter's Matilija Poppy	perennial rhizomatous herb	List 4.2	None	None
Opuntia californica var*. californica* Snake Cholla	perennial stem succulent	List 1B.1	None	None
Selaginella cinerascens Ashy Spike-moss	rhizomatous herb	List 4.1	None	None
Senecio astephanus San Gabriel Ragwort	perennial herb	List 4	None	None
Stemodia durantifolia Purple Stemodia	perennial herb	List 2.1	None	None
Suaeda esteroa California Seablite	perennial herb	List 1B.2	USFWS Endangered	None
Suaeda taxifolia Woolly Seablite	perennial evergreen shrub	List 4.2	None	None
Viguiera laciniata San Diego County Viguiera	perennial shrub	List 4.2	None	None

Table 4. Special Status Animals Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park

Species	Form	Federal/State Status	Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park
Accipiter cooperii Cooper's hawk	bird	CDFG WL	Moderate
Aimophila ruficeps canescens Southern California Rufous-crowned Sparrow	bird	CDFG WL	None
Anniella pulchra pulchra Silvery Legless Lizard	reptile	CDFG SSC	None
Antrozous pallidus Pallid Bat	mammal	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Aspidoscelis hyperythra Orange-throated Whiptail	reptile	CDFG SSC	None
Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri Coastal Western Whiptail	reptile	None	None
Branchinecta sandiegonensis San Diego Fairy Shrimp	invertebrate	USFWS Endangered	None
Branta bernicla Brant	bird	CDFG SSC	None
Buteo lineatus Red-shouldered Hawk	bird	None	Moderate
Calypte costae Costa's Hummingbird	bird	None	Low
Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus sandiegensis San Diego Cactus Wren	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG SSC	None
Carduelis lawrencei Lawrence's Goldfinch	bird	USFWS BCC	Moderate
Chaetodipus californicus femoralis Dulzura Pocket Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	None
Chaetodipus fallax pallidus Pallid San Diego Pocket Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	None
Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus Western Snowy Plover	bird	USFWS Threatened, BCC; CDFG SSC	Low

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park

Choeronycteris mexicana Mexican Long-tongued Bat	mammal	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Chondestes grammacus Lark Sparrow	bird	None	Moderate
Cicindela gabbii Western Tidal-flat Tiger Beetle	invertebrate	None	None
Cicindela latesignata latesignata Western Beach Tiger Beetle	invertebrate	None	None
Coleonyx variegatus abbotti San Diego Banded Gecko	reptile	None	None
Danaus plexippus Monarch Butterfly	invertebrate	None	Moderate
Dendroica petechia brewsteri Yellow Warbler	bird	CDFG SSC	None
Diadophis punctatus similis San Diego Ringneck Snake	reptile	None	Moderate
Elanus leucurus White-tailed Kite	bird	CDFG FP	Moderate
Empidonax traillii extimus Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered	None
Eremophila alpestris actia California Horned Lark	bird	CDFG WL	Low
Eumeces skiltonianus interparietalis Coronado Skink	reptile	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Falco columbarius Merlin	bird	CDFG WL	Low
Hydroprogne caspia Caspian Tern	bird	USFWS BCC	None
Icteria virens Yellow-breasted Chat	bird	CDFG SSC	Moderate
Lanius ludovicianus Loggerhead Shrike	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG SSC	Moderate

Table 3. Special Status Plant Species Known from or with the Potential to Occur in El Toyon Park

Laterallus jamaicensis coturniculus California Black Rail	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG Threatened, FP	None
Neotoma lepida intermedia San Diego Desert Woodrat	mammal	CDFG SSC	None
Onychomys torridus ramona Southern Grasshopper Mouse	mammal	CDFG SSC	None
Pandion haliaetus Osprey	bird	CDFG WL	None
Passerculus sandwichensis beldingi Belding's savannah sparrow	bird	CDFG Endangered	None
Picoides nuttallii Nuttall's Woodpecker	bird	None	None
Polioptila californica californica California Gnatcatcher	bird	USFWS Threatened; CDFG SSC	None
Rallus longirostris levipes Light-footed Clapper Rail	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered, FP	None
Salvadora hexalepis virgultea Coast Patch-nosed Snake	reptile	CDFG SSC	None
Scaphiopus hammondii Western Spadefoot Toad	amphibian	CDFG SSC	None
Selasphorus sasin Allen's Hummingbird	bird	None	Low
Sterna forsteri Forster's Tern	bird	None	None
Sternula antillarum browni California Least Tern	bird	USFWS Endangered; CDFG Endangered, FP	None
Thalasseus elegans Elegant Tern	bird	USFWS BCC; CDFG WL	None
Thamnophis hammondii Two-striped Garter Snake	reptile	CDFG SSC	None

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